

## An Integration Of Emotional Intelligence And Leadership Development In The Educational Process To Improve Students' Performance At Medan Aviation Polytechnic: An Innovative Strategy In Human Resource Management

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Keywords:</b> WhatsApp, Medan Aviation Polytechnic, Case Study, Descriptive Qualitative.</p>	<p>The increasing use of instant messaging applications, particularly WhatsApp, has had a significant impact on various aspects of life, including the educational environment. This research focuses on analyzing the ethical practices of WhatsApp usage at the Medan Aviation Polytechnic, a higher education institution with unique characteristics and a high demand for communication. This research is motivated by the phenomenon of WhatsApp misuse at the Medan Aviation Polytechnic, such as the spread of misinformation, harassment, and privacy violations. The objective of this research is to analyze the ethical practices of WhatsApp usage at the Medan Aviation Polytechnic, encompassing aspects such as the application's use for academic purposes, communication between students and lecturers, and the social impact of WhatsApp usage. The research method employed is descriptive qualitative with a case study approach. Data was collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The research findings indicate that the ethical practices of WhatsApp usage at the Medan Aviation Polytechnic still need improvement. The research findings show a tendency to use WhatsApp for non-academic purposes, such as gossiping, spreading unverified information, and even harassment. Additionally, this research also found that WhatsApp usage can have positive impacts, such as facilitating communication and collaboration, as well as enhancing access to information. The conclusion of this research highlights the importance of education and socialization regarding the ethical use of WhatsApp at the Medan Aviation Polytechnic. This research recommends the development of ethical guidelines for WhatsApp usage, training for students and lecturers, and regular monitoring and evaluation of ethical practices in WhatsApp usage.</p>
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### INTRODUCTION

WhatsApp has become one of the main communication tools at Medan Aviation Polytechnic to support academic activities such as assignment submission, group discussions, and important announcements. However, irresponsible use has caused serious problems,

including the spread of false information, harassment, and violation of privacy. This condition affects the regularity of the learning process and creates an uncondusive environment. Communication ethics are a crucial aspect in maintaining the effectiveness of learning through WhatsApp. In addition, the social influence of this platform, such as the formation of public opinion and the spread of rumors, also has the potential to trigger conflict among students. Lack of awareness of digital security increases the risk of data leaks and cyber attacks. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the ethical practices of using WhatsApp at the Medan Aviation Polytechnic.

In the rapidly evolving landscape of aviation education, the cultivation of human capital has become as critical as technical proficiency. Medan Aviation Polytechnic, as a leading vocational institution preparing future professionals in the aviation industry, faces the challenge of not only equipping students with technical knowledge but also developing their soft skills—particularly in leadership and emotional intelligence (EI). These attributes are increasingly recognized as key determinants of individual and organizational success in high-stress and high-responsibility sectors such as aviation. Emotional Intelligence (EI), defined as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others, plays a pivotal role in shaping interpersonal dynamics, decision-making, and adaptability—skills that are indispensable for future aviation professionals. Research has consistently shown that high levels of emotional intelligence correlate with improved academic performance, teamwork, and leadership potential. Meanwhile, structured leadership development programs embedded within the educational framework can foster self-confidence, responsibility, and initiative among students.

The integration of emotional intelligence and leadership development into the educational process represents a strategic innovation in human resource management within educational institutions. Rather than viewing students solely as learners, this approach treats them as developing assets in a future organizational context. By cultivating emotionally intelligent student-leaders, institutions like Medan Aviation Polytechnic can produce graduates who are not only technically capable but also emotionally resilient, collaborative, and adaptable—qualities demanded in today's aviation industry.

This study aims to explore how a strategic integration of emotional intelligence training and leadership development within the curriculum can significantly enhance students' academic and behavioral performance. The research investigates practical models of implementation, evaluates their effectiveness in a polytechnic setting, and recommends frameworks for sustainable integration aligned with modern human resource development practices.

## Literature Review

### Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Its Role in Education

Emotional Intelligence (EI), as conceptualized by Goleman (1995), includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. In educational settings, EI has been increasingly acknowledged as a critical factor influencing students' academic

performance, interpersonal relationships, and stress management (Parker et al., 2004). Students with high EI are better able to cope with academic pressure, work collaboratively, and exhibit resilience in challenging environments.

In the context of vocational education, such as at Medan Aviation Polytechnic, emotional intelligence supports the development of professional competencies that go beyond technical mastery. Studies by Salovey & Mayer (1990) and later developments in applied EI models highlight the strong correlation between emotional regulation and decision-making quality—skills essential in aviation environments where safety and communication are critical.

### **Leadership Development in Educational Institutions**

Leadership is no longer viewed as an innate ability but rather as a set of competencies that can be cultivated through deliberate training and experiential learning. Kouzes and Posner (2017) emphasize that effective leadership development begins during formative educational experiences, where students are exposed to opportunities for collaboration, initiative-taking, and critical thinking.

Various models of student leadership programs in higher education—including peer mentoring, student-led projects, and leadership boot camps—have shown promising outcomes in fostering responsibility, confidence, and proactivity among participants (Komives et al., 2005). In aviation education, leadership translates to the ability to communicate clearly under pressure, make informed decisions, and manage teams in high-stakes operational contexts.

### **Integrating Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Development**

The integration of emotional intelligence and leadership development has emerged as an innovative approach in education and human resource development. According to Boyatzis and McKee (2013), leadership effectiveness is deeply rooted in one's ability to manage emotions and influence others positively—making EI a cornerstone of modern leadership models. This integrated approach enhances self-efficacy, empathy, and social responsibility, thereby preparing students for leadership roles in dynamic, multicultural work environments such as aviation. In the context of HR management, this dual-development model aligns with talent development strategies that emphasize not just what people can do, but how they do it—with emotional competence and ethical leadership.

### **Relevance to Human Resource Management and Aviation Education**

From a human resource management (HRM) perspective, integrating emotional intelligence and leadership into educational frameworks represents a proactive investment in talent. Educational institutions that embed these competencies into their curricula contribute to the creation of job-ready, emotionally intelligent professionals capable of thriving in complex work settings. Particularly in aviation—a sector defined by stringent safety standards, high-stakes teamwork, and critical decision-making—the benefits of emotionally intelligent leadership are substantial. Research by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO, 2020) supports the inclusion of soft skill development in aviation training as a way to enhance human performance and safety. For Medan Aviation

Polytechnic, adopting this integrated approach aligns with global HRM best practices and supports the institution's mission to produce not only skilled, but also emotionally mature and ethically grounded aviation professionals.

## METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study method. Data were collected through:

- a. Observation: Observing WhatsApp usage patterns in the campus environment.
- b. Interview: Involving 15 students and 5 lecturers to gain insight into communication practices.
- c. Document analysis: Review campus guidelines and literature related to digital ethics.
- d. Data analysis: Data were analyzed using thematic methods to identify key patterns, namely:
  1. Interview transcription.
  2. Grouping themes based on literature.
  3. Preparation of recommendations based on analysis results.

**Research Framework** This research framework includes analysis of ethical practices, social impact, and digital security. Each stage is analyzed to provide practical recommendations that can be implemented by educational institutions.

**Research Flow Diagram**

- a. Identification of problems: Observing the phenomenon of WhatsApp usage.
- b. Data collection: Observation, interviews, and document studies.
- c. Data analysis: Identification of key themes and interpretation of results.
- d. Recommendation: Development of ethical guidelines and communication training.

## RESULTS

The results of the study show that the implementation of educational rules and an appreciation-based approach is more effective in shaping the discipline and character of cadets than repressive punishment. In addition, the togetherness and family factors in the civil service school environment also play a role in increasing the motivation and mental resilience of cadets. This approach supports the integration of leadership values and soft skills, which are key factors in creating graduates who are not only disciplined but also have superior character.

### 1. WhatsApp Usage Practices

The results of the study showed that 60% of students used WhatsApp for non-academic purposes such as gossiping. As many as 27% spread unverified information, while 13% were involved in harassment through the platform. This shows the need for education on the ethical and responsible use of the platform. The importance of rules and penalties in forming disciplined behavior, which is in line with recommendations for the development of ethical guidelines for the use of WhatsApp

at the Medan Aviation Polytechnic, as a control tool to increase ethical awareness (Sukarwoto, S. & Caesar Akbar, M 2023)

2. Social Influence

WhatsApp is often used as a tool to shape public opinion and spread rumors. This condition triggers conflict among students, especially in discussion groups that are not strictly supervised. This social impact emphasizes the need for better control in the use of WhatsApp for academic activities. In the context of vocational education, this finding supports the need for integration of soft skill values, including digital communication ethics, to create an effective learning environment in institutions such as the Medan Aviation Polytechnic (Akbar, MC, & Rahma, F. A 2024)

3. Digital Security Awareness

Low awareness of digital security is a major concern. Only 40% of respondents use security features such as two-step encryption. Meanwhile, 30% said they had been victims of cyber attacks due to the lack of data protection.

4. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Supporting Factors:

WhatsApp's ease of access allows for fast and efficient communication. Academic information can be easily disseminated through WhatsApp groups.

Inhibiting Factors:

- a. Low awareness of the ethics of using social media.
- b. Lack of supervision from the campus regarding activities in WhatsApp groups.
- c. The lack of formal rules regarding the ethics of using WhatsApp.

**Implications of Findings**

These findings suggest that WhatsApp can support learning if used ethically. However, without adequate regulation and education, the platform can become a significant source of distraction.

**Table 1.** Data of list activities

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gossiping	25	60%
Spreading unverified information	8	27%
Abuse	2	13%
Total	35	100%

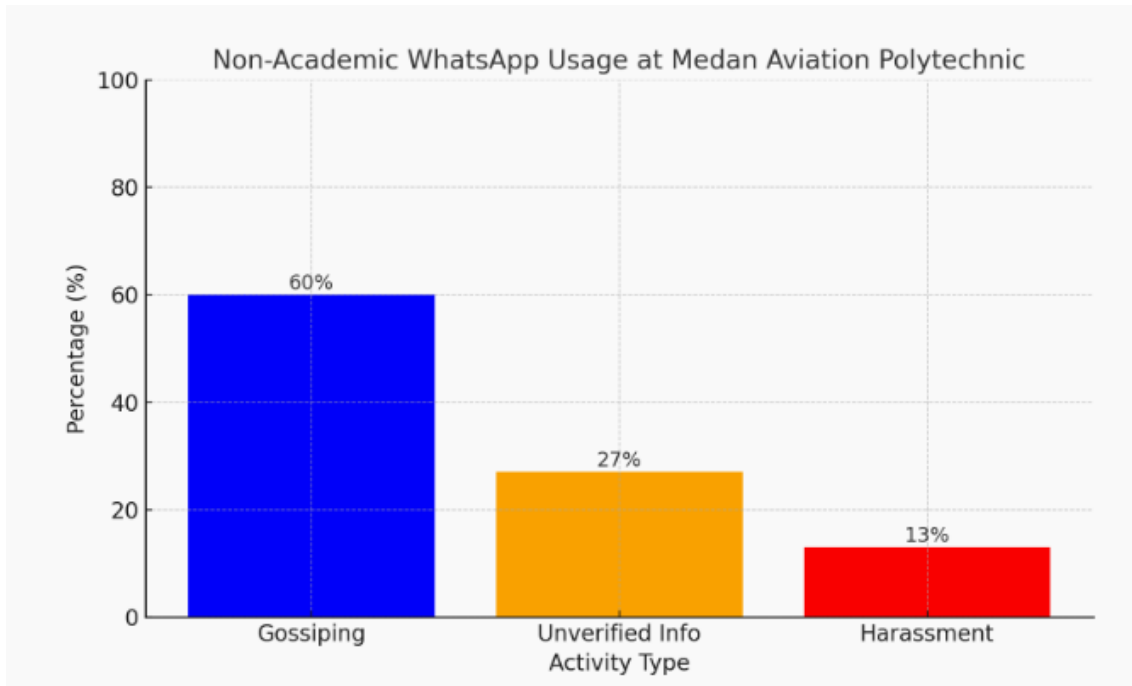


Figure 1. Table of result activities

### CONCLUSION

The use of WhatsApp at Medan Aviation Polytechnic shows great potential to support learning, but is accompanied by challenges related to digital ethics and security. Recommendations include: Development of clear and comprehensive ethical guidelines. Digital communication training for students and lecturers. Regular monitoring and evaluation by the institution to ensure compliance with ethical guidelines. Integrating digital ethics modules into higher education curricula. Create an academic-specific WhatsApp group with a designated moderator. Conduct regular seminars or workshops related to digital security.

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