

Social Sustainability of Online Instant Messaging Platform- WhatsApp

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Abstract The authors present an analysis of Social Sustainability of the online communication platform WhatsApp and derive a definition for a Socially Sustainable System in the context of online instant messaging platforms. A set of “factors” has been identified that affect the social sustainability of WhatsApp. These factors and the frequency of their recurrence were used to determine the perceived importance of the stages of interaction (based on Gulf of Execution and Gulf of Evaluation) in terms of social sustainability. It was found that ‘Goal Formation’ is perceived to be the most important stage followed by ‘Action Specification’, ‘Evaluation’ and ‘Perception’. A set of tangible artifacts that influence the system usage were also identified. Designers can work on designing sustainable communication platforms by analyzing each stage of the interaction based on the results of this study and by taking logical decisions in order to ensure a healthy and liveable online community.

Keywords: Social Sustainability • Social Media • Instant Messaging