User Perception on the Use of Social Networking Sites: A Case Study of Government College Rhenock, Sikkim

Dina Subba[1]; Prof. R.K Choudhary[2]

Research Scholar, Department of Library and Information Science, Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Motihari, Bihar[1]; Head and Supervisor, Department of Library and Information Science, Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Motihari, Bihar, India[2]

dinasubba@gmail.com, rkchoudhary@mgcub.ac.in

ABSTRACT

Social networking sites (SNS) are a big online platform for people to connect with other people. It helps in sharing ideas, information, photos, videos, activities, and many more. The uses of SNS have been widely prevalent in this digital era. In the context of libraries, social networking sites are the new phenomena of creating and sharing collaborative information and communication technology environments on the Internet. Web 2.0 based applications such as wiki, blogs, RSS, IMs, etc. bring a new paradigm shift in electronic communications where people of different groups, ages, and gender can learn it. The present study is an attempt to explore the use of social networking sites by the college students of Government College, Rhenock, Sikkim. The study involves many aspects related to the use of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Flicker, etc. as well as their main purpose of using it. A structured questionnaire is prepared and distributed among college students of different disciplines for the collection of data. The paper reveals that most of the students used SNS to communicate with friends, family, and for entertainment rather than for educational purposes. The use of YouTube and Facebook is the most common among social networking sites. The study finds that lack of internet facility is the main constraint of using it followed by lack of computer literacy. Few recommendations were given for the betterment of using SNS.

KEYWORDS: Social Networking Sites, Users, ICT, Internet, Government College Rhenock.

INTRODUCTION

Man is a social animal and the basic need and quality of a human being are to be social. Humans always connect themselves to society in so many ways. The 21st century has witnessed some of the most amazing technological advancements in history. Due to the increase in the workload, geographical distances, economic concerns, and the present day's pandemic of COVID 19, people have minimized socializing. The development of technology and its social networking sites (SNS) have brought people from all over the world into one platform by creating, sharing, or exchanging information and ideas. The conventional method of social networking which included letters, emails,

telegrams, phone calls has made advancements in e-mails, chatting, MMS, and text messages making correspondence much easier and faster. Social networking sites are mostly used by college students nowadays, as it helps students to get more useful information, to connect with learning groups and other educational systems that make education convenient.

Social networking sites are being used as pedagogical tools as students and teachers can use them for connectivity, social support, collaboration on information gathering, discovery and sharing, content creation, aggregation, and modification of information (Ansari & Khan, 2020). Today in India particularly among Indian college students, the usage of social networking sites has significantly increased (Kapoor et al., 2018) and it certainly has a far-reaching impact on the academic and other activities of the students.

Social Networking sites are web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system; (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007)

And in the present situation of this COVID-19 pandemic, SNS has become very popular among students as well as the teacher who are using a Facebook group to stream live lectures and host discussions. Perhaps, it's important to understand the impact of social media and its sites on education before using it. Hence, the study has been taken up to find the user perceptions on the use of SNS, its application, awareness level, and extent of use of SNS among the college students of Government College Rhenock, Sikkim.

Government College Rhenock (GCR): A Profile

Government College Rhenock was established in the year 2004 and occupies a total area of 32.67 acres amidst the serenity and green vegetation of the hills in Rhenock, a small town in the East district of Sikkim. The college since its inception has been fulfilling the higher educational aspirations and needs of students from the rural and urban areas within and outside Sikkim. It is a co-educational college affiliated with Sikkim University, offering the Honours program in B.A., B.Sc., and B.Com. GCR College also has a Library with a good collection of Books, Journals, newspapers, Magazines to meet the information needs of the faculty and students. The library is in the process of Automation using SOUL 2.0 Library Software. (www.sgcrhenock.in)

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

For writing, this research paper number of articles from Journals has been reviewed to get insight into the research topic. Following are the relevant works of literature on the topic.

Gok (2016) evaluated the positive and negative effects of social networking sites on students' studying habits. The paper finds that digital technologies and social networking sites harm the students studying habits. The study also indicated that the majority of the students spend more time on social media instead of studying academic courses. The paper recommends that the positive and negative impacts of social media on the students be aware, the usage of the device should be limited.

Hamade (2013) conducted a study on the perception and use of social networking sites among University students to study the positive and negative impacts. The study finds that the use of Twitter and Facebook among University students is more prevalent than posting on the sites. The study finds a positive impact of SNS is better relationships with family, relatives, and friends and more involvement in social and political activities. Two major challenges of SNS are found to be negligence in work/study and time consumption.

Haneefa & Sumitha (2011) carried out a study on the perception and use of social networking sites by the students of Calicut University to study awareness about SNS, sources of information, commonly used social networking sites, the purpose of using SNS, time spent on SNS, frequency of visiting SNS, opinions about SNS. The study finds that students communicate mostly on the SNS and the majority of the students used Orkut rather than Facebook and MySpace. The frequency of use SNS finds that students use it twice a week and send scrapes and meet new friends. The study reveals that lack of security and privacy are the main concerns of social networking sites.

Lalnunpuii, Verma & Ngurtinkhuma (2019) investigate the impact of SNS on college students of RIPANS, Aizawl, and focused on the use of SNS on academic performance and its both positive and negative influence as well as the purpose and problem faced by the students in using SNS. The paper finds that WhatsApp is the most common SNS tool followed by Facebook and mostly students used SNS for sharing photos and videos rather than finding information. The major drawback has been revealed that the majority of the students spent time on non-academic activities and spent more rather than reading books and a few students also reveal that use of SNS leads to lower performance in academic activities. The suggestion was given for the awareness program regarding the use of SNSs for the academic activities of the students.

Lun (2021) conducted a study on the impact of using social networking sites (SNS) among Postgraduates students of Manipur University to study the average amount of time spent, frequency to use, most commonly used social networking sites, and the challenges faced during using it. The study reveals that students mostly used SNS for online learning, communicating with friends. The study further reveals that SNS is not affecting their academic performance but they are concerned about the lack of sleep, late-night, internet addiction, lack of privacy, data security, identity theft, cyberbullying, etc.

Park (2010) carried out a study to compare the user perception of various social networking sites' usage patterns among three different user activity groups such as active users, semi-active users, and non-active users in University. The study comprises the population of undergraduates, graduates, and faculty members at Yonsei University. The findings reveal that the users of three groups demonstrated distinct patterns of SNS like undergraduates used the profile service more than community service and graduates vice versa whereas faculties are not active users of SNS. The study identified the factors that affected different usage patterns are desire for expression, peer influences, familiarity with information technologies, sensitivity to the private nature of using the internet, and perception of the SNS. The study recommended for implementation of SNS-based libraries and information services in academic settings.

Raj, Gupta & Slathia (2021) conducted a study on the use of SNS and other services for learning among college youth. The main purpose of the paper was to assess the attitude of college youth toward social networking sites and

to what extent they are utilizing this SNS as a tool for education. The paper reveals that respondents use YouTube as the most common tool for education purposes as compared to WhatsApp and Facebook. The paper reveals that male respondents use mostly LinkedIn and Twitter whereas female respondents use Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube. The study reveals that there is no significant differences exist in the attitude and perceived impact of male and female students at the undergraduate level.

Ramasamy (2020) evaluates the information literacy skills and social media literacy skills of the post-graduate students and M.Phil scholars of Arts and Science College at Kodaikanal. The paper finds that students of Science are more skilled in almost all the fields like basic skills in social media, skills to create groups and content using social media tools, skills to undertake content management tasks as an administrator, and also the skills required for the cautiousness of social media tools. The paper also reveals that most students are capable of using social media tools to communicate and interact with friends and to learn online. The paper recommended that there should be a user awareness program for the students on the various modules of social media literacy.

Saini et al. (2020) explored the study of the effect of social networking sites on the quality of life of college students from a city in North India to study how the internet and social networking sites are affecting the physical, mental and spiritual health of the students due to the advent and extensive use of the Internet and smartphones. The study also reveals that the time spent on social networking sites is also affecting the quality of life as a whole, especially among college-going students. The paper also compares the daily vs. non-daily users of SNS and finds that daily users are more efficient and are better to handle stress related to their relationships and work. The paper also suggests that internet use may not have reached the levels where it embarks on the existing state of health

Verma & Lalnunpuii (2017) in their paper examined the perception and attitudes toward social networking sites by students and teachers at the Indian National Institutes of Technology (NIT), Mizoram. The main objective of the paper is to study awareness, perception, the period in SNS, popular SNS tools, and major problems in accessing SNS. The paper finds that all the respondents are aware of SNS and use it for sharing information and communication. The use of SNS tools like Facebook is most common among the respondents. Major challenges reported were poor internet connectivity, lack of time, privacy, not being allowed in departments to use the computer, and lack of technical knowledge by the respondents.

Wang (2021) attempted to explore the trust and privacy perceptions among University students (UG & PG) while using social networking sites for learning purposes. The paper finds that students are generally satisfied with the use of SNSs for learning. The paper finds that PG students are using SNSs more for learning as compared to UG students. The paper also reveals that there is a lack of privacy awareness among the UG Students thereby recommending the University provide more guidance and training to students on the privacy issue of SNSs.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the paper is to find the user perception towards the use of social networking sites but more specific objectives to investigate under study are:-
- ✓ To find out the purpose of use of SNS among the college students of Government College Rhenock;
- ✓ To investigate the use of popular SNS being used by the students;

- ✓ To identify the level of awareness and its use;
- ✓ To explore the problems being faced by the students and;
- ✓ To recommend the means and ways for making effective use of SNS.

METHODOLOGY

The study is restricted to the Government College Rhenock, Sikkim covering the population from the different departments of students in the field of science, social science, and humanities. The study is a questionnaire-based survey of user perception of the use of SNS by college students. The simple, well-organized questionnaire was designed to collect the relevant data from the respondents. In this questionnaire mostly the close-ended questionnaire was prepared.

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULT

The collected data through the questionnaire has been thoroughly scrutinized, organized, and tabulated by using simple statistical methods and their analysis along with interpretations have been given in the following consecutive tables:

Table No. 1 Sample size of distributed questionnaires

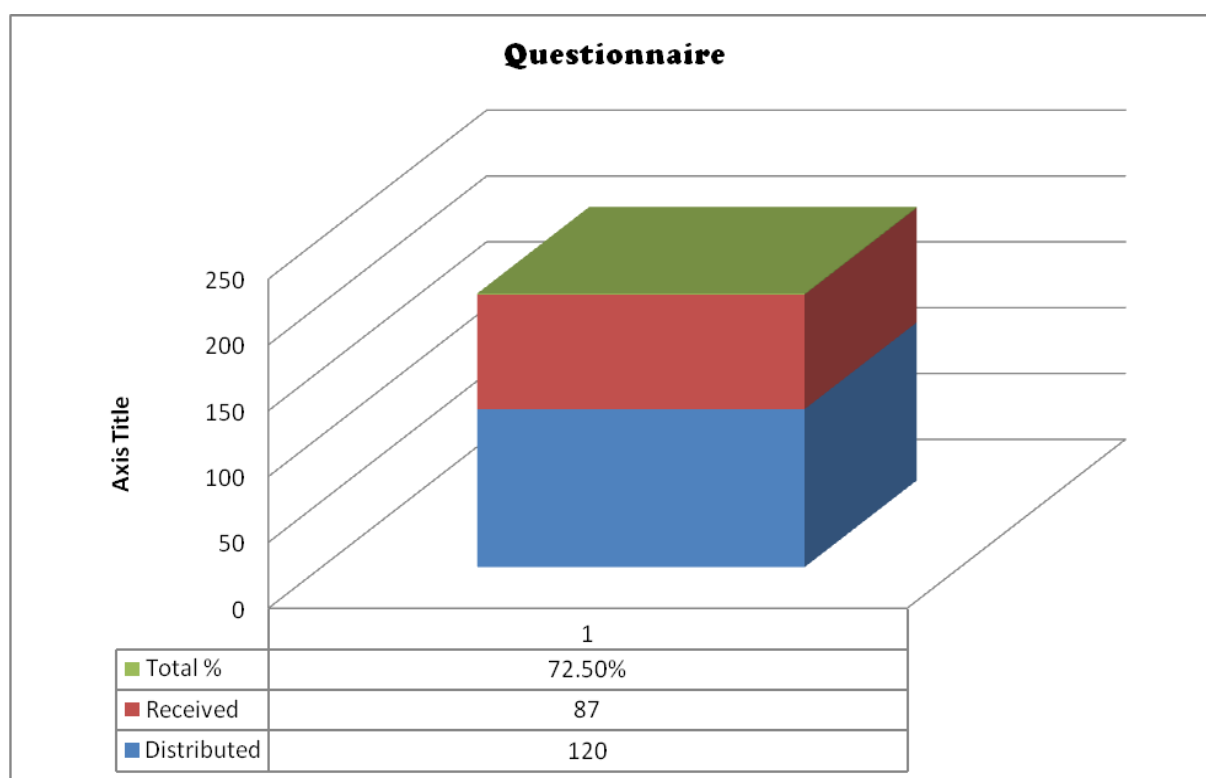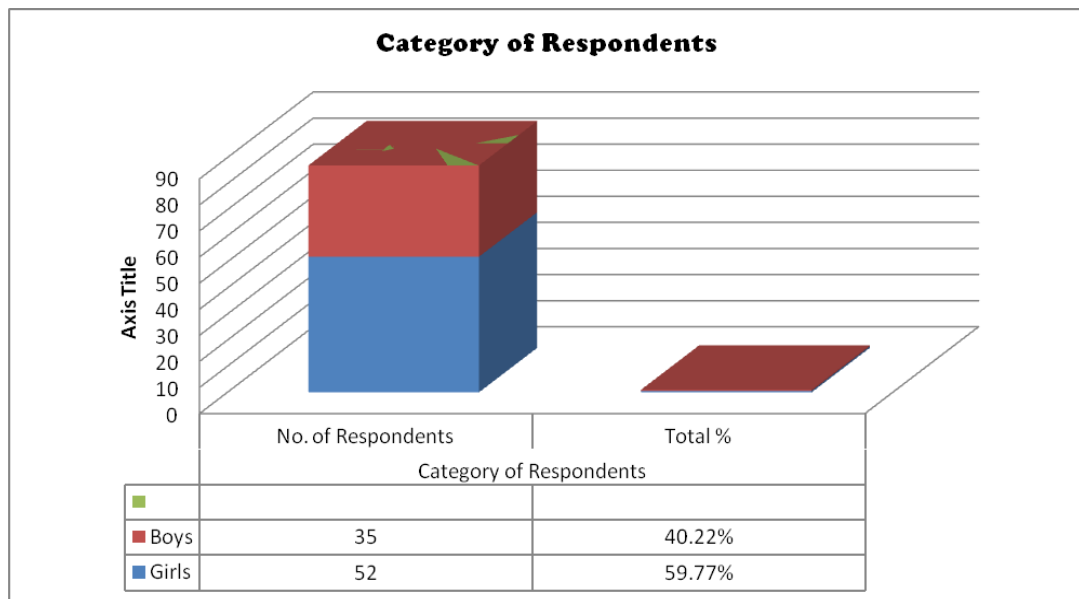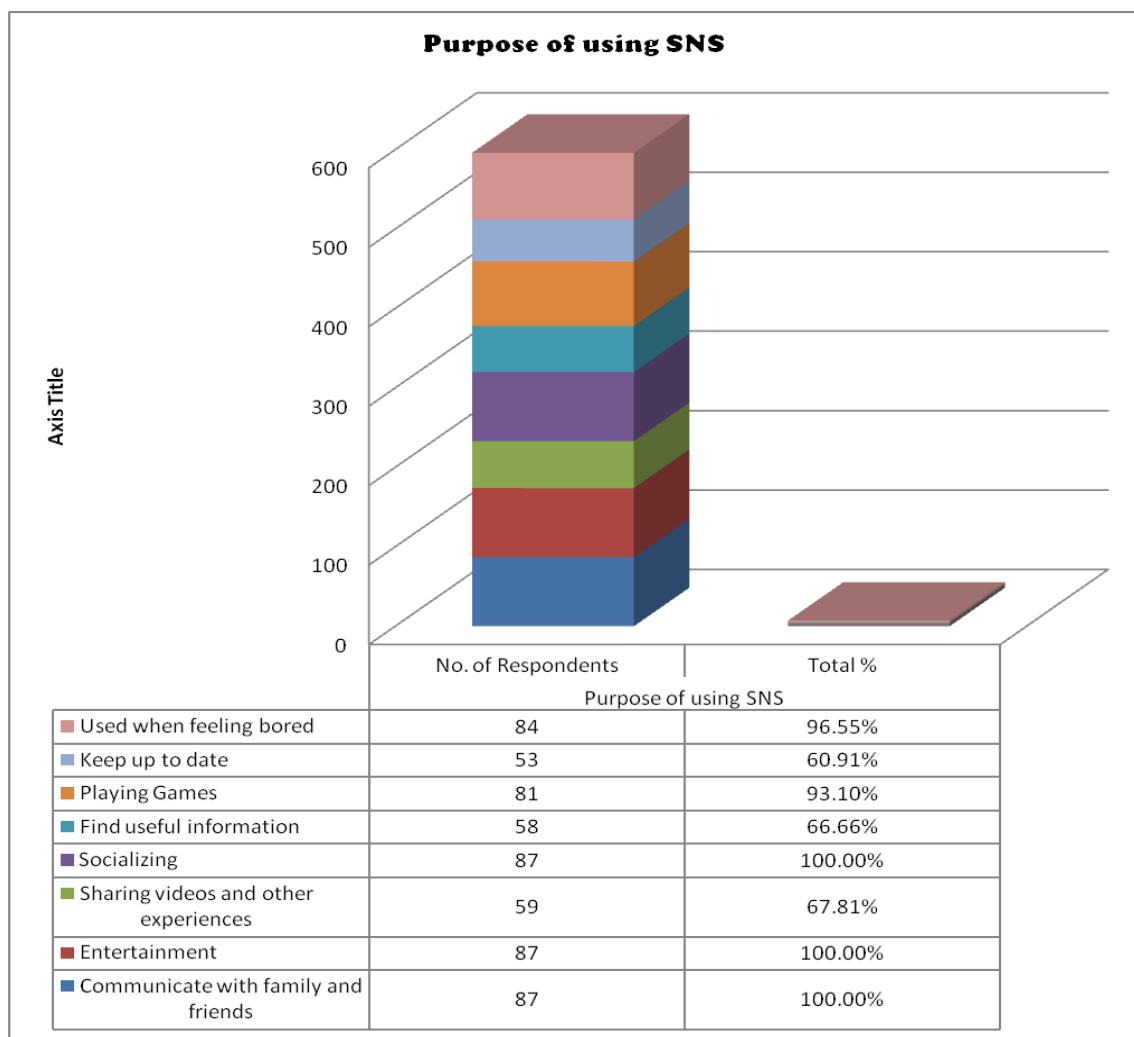|	1
Total %	72.50%
Received	87
Distributed	120

Table 1 represents the sample size of the study. The sample of 120 questionnaires was distributed randomly to the students of Government College Rhenock, out of which 87 were received back having a response rate of 72.5 %.

Table No. 2 Category of respondents

	No. of Respondents	Total %
■ Boys	35	40.22%
■ Girls	52	59.77%

Tables 2 demonstrate the data of various categories of respondents. The study finds that Girls 59.77% responded more than Boys with a rate of 40.22%. The study shows Girls are more active on social networking sites.

Table No. 3 Purpose of using SNS

	No. of Respondents	Total %
■ Used when feeling bored	84	96.55%
■ Keep up to date	53	60.91%
■ Playing Games	81	93.10%
■ Find useful information	58	66.66%
■ Socializing	87	100.00%
■ Sharing videos and other experiences	59	67.81%
■ Entertainment	87	100.00%
■ Communicate with family and friends	87	100.00%

Table 3 provides the information related to the purpose of using SNS and the result shows that all the respondents used SNS for communicating with family and friends, for entertainment, and for socializing. The study shows that students are engaged in social networking sites more when they are feeling bored (96.55%) and on playing games (93.10%) rather than finding useful information for their studies. The study finds that the uses of SNS harm students of GCR.

Table No. 4 Commonly used Social Networking

Commonly used Networking Sites

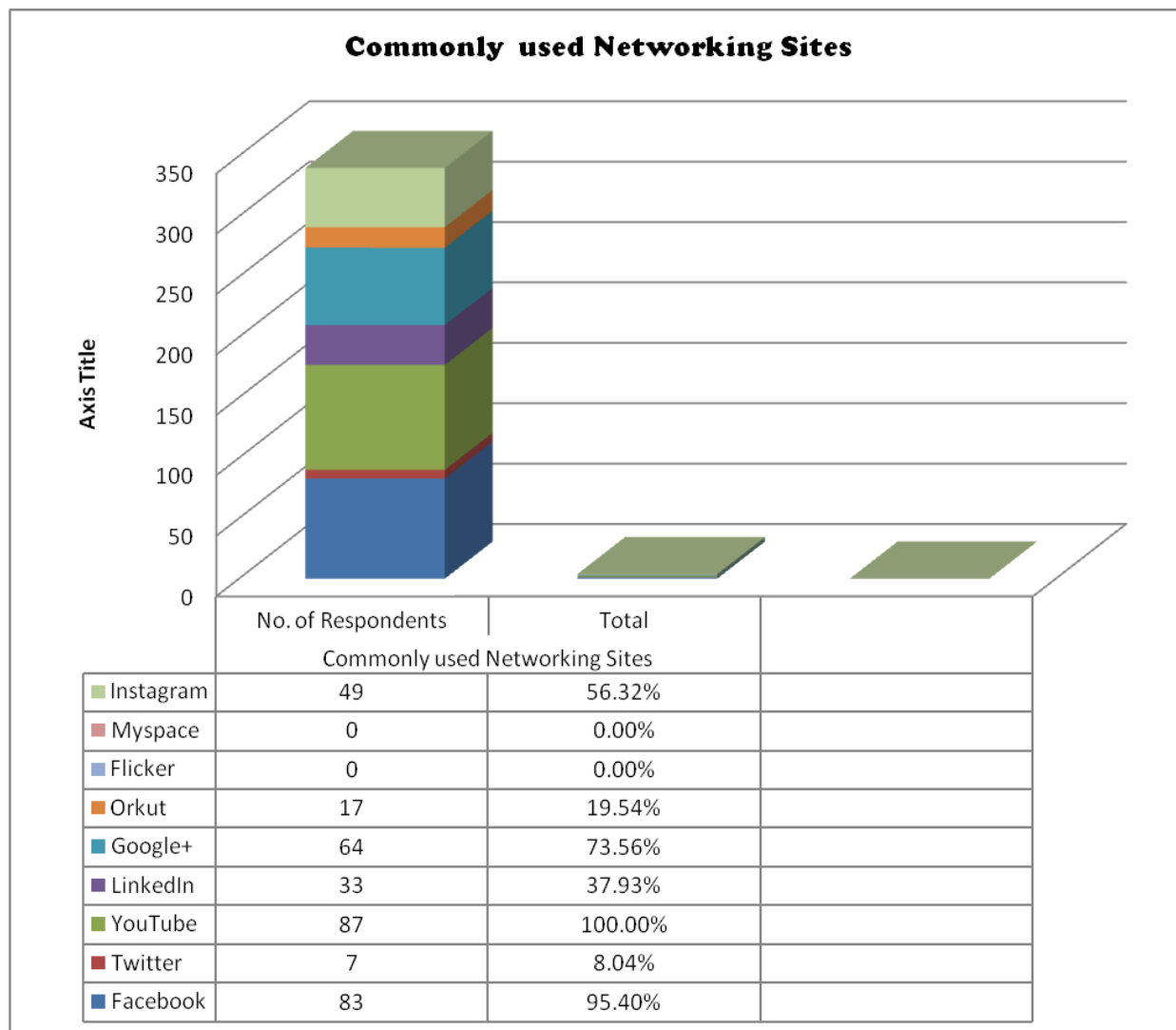| Commonly used Networking Sites	No. of Respondents	Total
Instagram	49	56.32%
Myspace	0	0.00%
Flicker	0	0.00%
Orkut	17	19.54%
Google+	64	73.56%
LinkedIn	33	37.93%
YouTube	87	100.00%
Twitter	7	8.04%
Facebook	83	95.40%

Table No 4 reveals the data related to commonly used social networking sites by the students. YouTube (100%) is used by all the students followed by Facebook with 95.40%. The use of Google+ sites with 73.56% reveals that students are using it to find some relevant information about their study followed by Instagram with 56.32% to post and watch videos. The above-cited sites are most familiar among the respondents. Other SNS tools like Orkut and Twitter are hardly used by the students with 19.54% and 8.04% respectively. The study finds that the students are not aware of SNS like Flicker and MySpace and do not use by the students.

Table No. 5 Source of information about using SNS

Source of Information

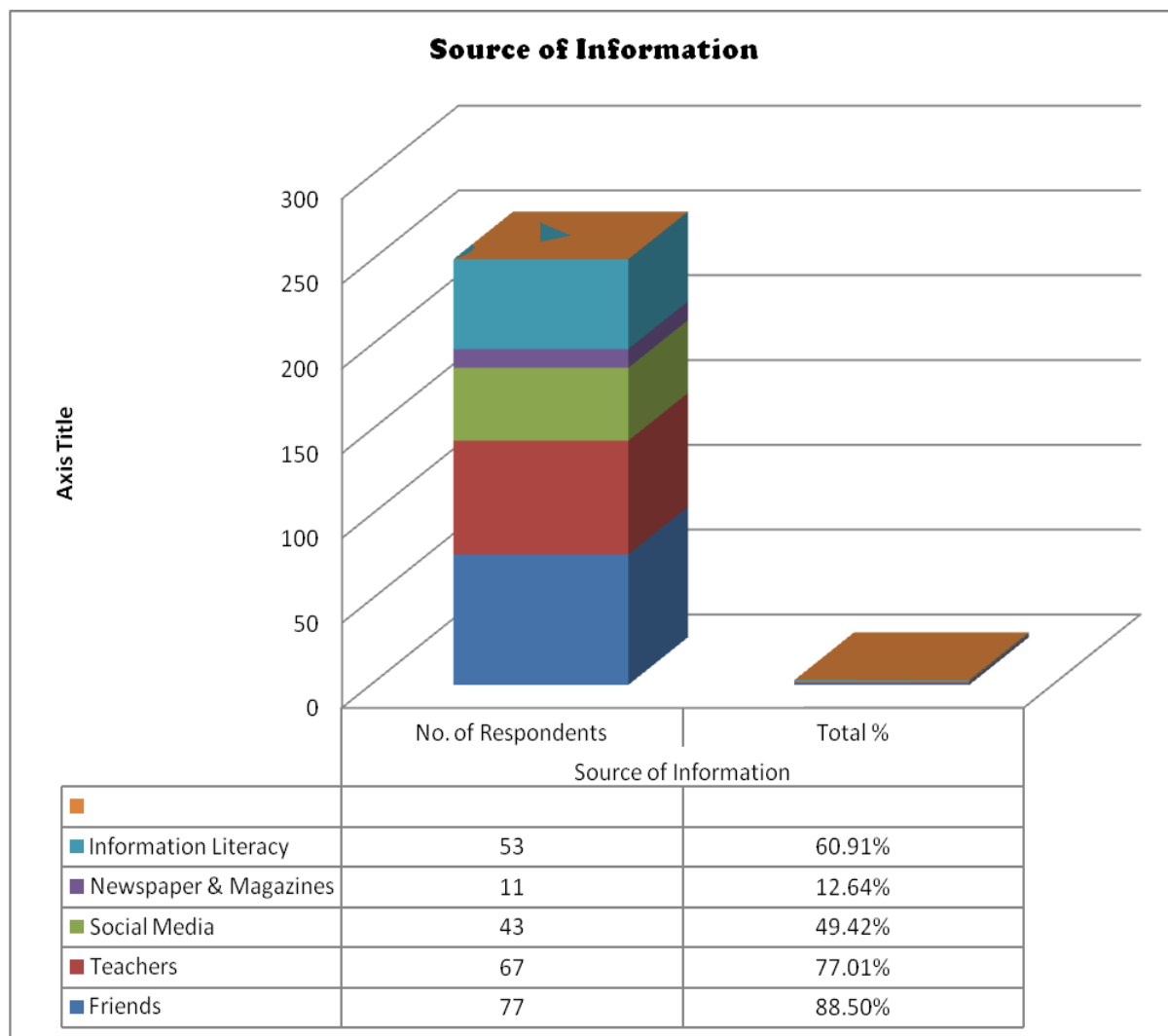| Source of Information	No. of Respondents	Total %
Information Literacy	53	60.91%
Newspaper & Magazines	11	12.64%
Social Media	43	49.42%
Teachers	67	77.01%
Friends	77	88.50%

Table No 5 demonstrates the different sources of information about the SNS. The study finds that friends 88.50% are the main source of information to know about the SNS followed by Teachers (77.01%). Information literacy program (60.91%) also helps the students to find information sources. The paper finds that students with 12.64% do not find newspapers and magazines as a source of information which indicates that students are not very aware or attracted or not interested in the reading materials.

Table No. 6 Types of the problem being faced while using SNS

Table No. 6 represents constraints or hurdles that are being faced by the respondents while accessing SNS. The study finds that 74.71 % of respondents accepted that inadequate internet facility is the main hurdle followed by lack of computer literacy (54.02%) among the students. 39.08% of students fear misusing personal information followed by a lack of security and privacy with 29.88%. 20.68% of students think that another hurdle to using SNS is a lack of academic information.

Types of Problem

Types of Problem	No of Respondents	Total %
Fear of misusing personal information	34	39.08%
Lack of academic information	18	20.68%
Lack of security and privacy	26	29.88%
Inadequate internet facility	65	74.71%
Lack of computer literacy	47	54.02%
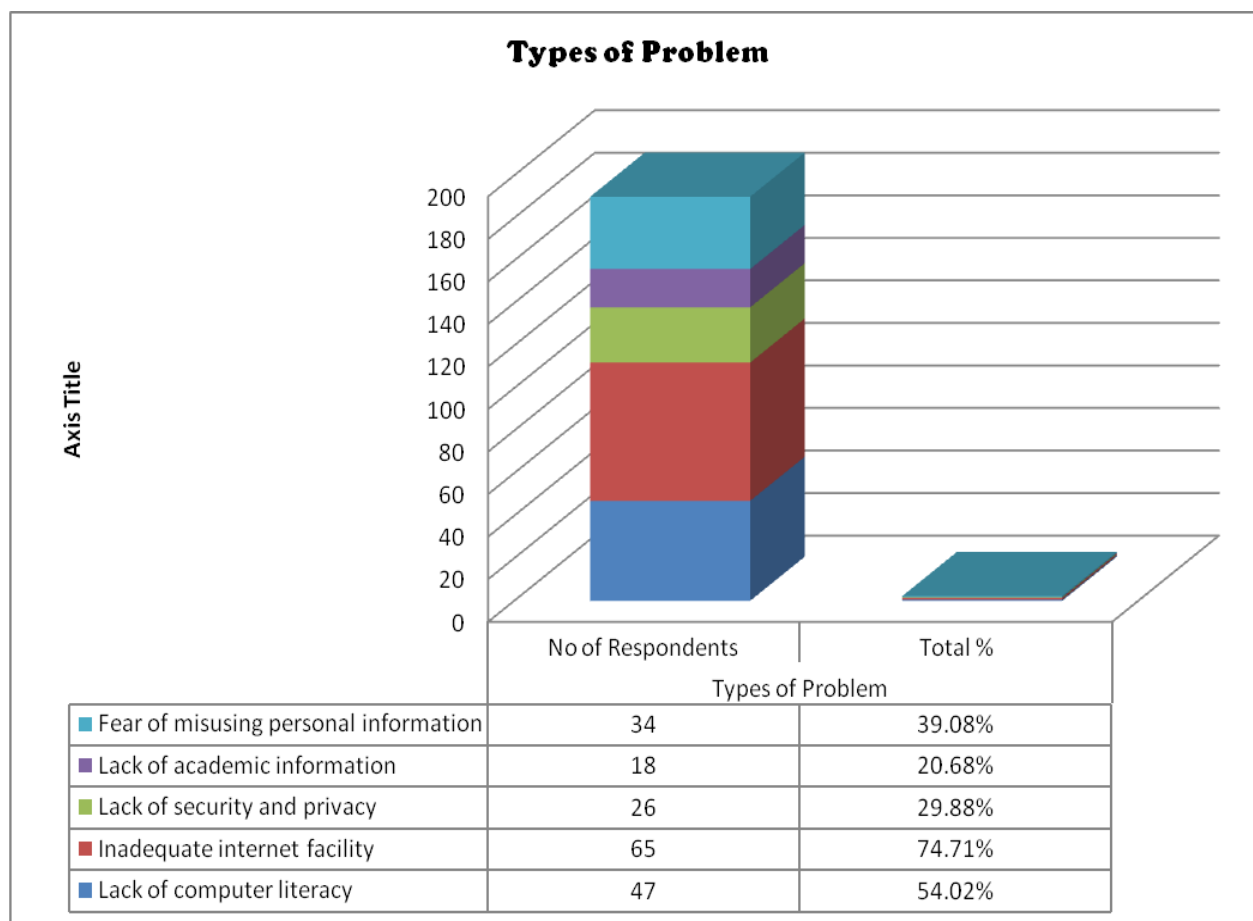
Apart from the above-mentioned technical constraints, students also feel that loneliness, depression, communication with their family members, anxiety, and even suicidal tendency has posed a threat and can be considered a problem of SNS.

FINDINGS

Following are the major findings of the above analysis: -

1. The study found that Girl students are more active on Social Networking Sites and (59.77%) of them have responded to the questionnaire.
2. The majority of the students used Social Networking Sites for communicating with family and friends, for entertainment and to socialize.
3. It was found that (93.10%) of students are engaged more in playing the game rather than using it for academic purposes and pose harmful to using SNS to them.
4. The majority with (100%) of students used YouTube followed by Facebook (95.40%).
5. The study also finds that Google+ is used by (73.56%) of students for their studies and found helpful and informative.
6. Most of the students (88.50%) find friends as a source of information followed by teachers (77.01%).
7. The study finds that students are more prone to phone and a very less number of students is reading newspaper and magazine (12.64%) finds them less informative.

8. The study finds that inadequate internet facility with (74.71%) is the main constraint of using SNS followed by (54.02%) lack of computer literacy among the students.

9. Few students with (20.68%) think that lack of academic information is also the main hurdle to using social networking sites.

SUGGESTIONS

The following recommendation would be considered for the better use of social networking sites by the students: -

➢ There should be an awareness program on the proper use of social networking sites as students are more prone to playing the game rather than for academic purposes.

➢ Awareness programs should be on the negative impact of using SNS as a study reveals some students complained of loneliness, depression, anxiety, and even suicidal tendency.

➢ The students should increase their reading habits of newspapers and other magazines rather than rely more on SNS.

➢ The college must work on internet connectivity with better speed as well as they must give training for computer operating.

➢ College can work on providing information related to their study on the College website or through some other social media tools so that students would be aware of the ongoing program.

CONCLUSION

The usage of SNS is gaining popularity among the students, although the present study only represents the Government College Rhenock, Sikkim, and highlights the various viewpoints as expressed by the respondents hence the result cannot be generalized to all the students. The authors feel that more such studies on the aspects should be undertaken covering more population from the other colleges and universities including the teachers. During this pandemic, the use of SNS has become more effective as everything has become online, which compels us to learn more about social networking sites and make the best use of them. Higher Education like Colleges and Universities and even School Management should conduct aware of the Pros and Cons of social networking sites as many more students have become victims of Games as well as Porn sites. Social networking has the role to empower parents, students, and teachers to use new ways of sharing information and building a community.

REFERENCES

[1] Ansari, J. A. N., & Khan, N. A. (2020). Exploring the role of social media in collaborative learning the new domain of learning. Smart Learn. Environ. 7, 9 https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-020-00118-7

[2] Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13(1), 210- 230

[3] Gok, T. (2016) The Effects of Social Networking Sites on Students' Studying and Habits. *International Journal of Research in Education and Science*, Vol. 2 (1), 85-93.

[4] Hamade, S. N (2013) Perception and Use of Social Networking Sites among University Students. *Library Review,* Vol. 62 (6/7), 388-397. https://doi.org/10.1108/LR-12-2012-013

[5] Haneefa, K & Sumitha. (2011) Perception and Use of Social Networking Sites by the Students of Calicut University. *DESIDOC, Journal of Library and Information Technology,* 31 (4), 295-301.

[6] Kapoor, K.K., Tamilmani, K., & Rana, N.P. (2018) Advances in Social Media Research: Past, Present, and Future. Information Systems Frontiers, 20, 531–558. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10796-017-9810-y

[7] Lalnunpuii, E., Verma, M.K., & Ngurtinkhuma, R.K. (2019) Impact of Social Networking Sites (SNS) on College Students: A Case Study of Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing Science (RIPANS), Aizawl. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal),* 2635.

[8] Park, Ji-Hong (2010) Differences among University Students and Faculties in Social Networking site Perception and Use. *The Electronic Library*, Vol. 28 (3), 417- 431 http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/02640471011051990

[9] Raj, M., Gupta, A. & Slathia, N. (2021) Use of Social Networking Sites and other Services for Learning among College Youth. *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy.* Vol. 2 (2), 1-8.

[10] Ramasamy, K. (2020) Social Media Literacy Skills of Postgraduate Students and M.Phil Scholars of Arts and Science College Affiliated to Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal: A Discipline-based Evaluative Study using the Indigenous Model. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 4089.

[11] Saini, N. et al. (2020) Effect of Social Networking Sites on the Quality of Life of College Students: A Cross-Sectional Study from a City in North India. *The Scientific World Journal*, Vol. 2020. http://doi.org/10.1155/2020/8576023

[12] Verma, M.K & Lalnunpuii, E. (2017) Perception and Attitudes of Teachers and Students towards Social Networking Sites: Case Study of NIT, Mizoram. *International Research: Journal of Library and Information Science,* Vol. 7 (2), 337-350.

[13] Wang, W. et al. (2021) Supporting Higher Education with Social Networks: Trust and Privacy vs Perceived Effectiveness. *Online Information Review,* Vol. 45 (1), 207-219.

_____