USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AMONG RESEARCH SCHOLARS OF KURUKSHETRA UNIVERSITY KURUKSHETRA

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Abstract: The present study aims to examine the "Use of Social Networking Sites among the Research Scholars of Kurukshetra University Kurukshetra" (KUK). The scope of the study was confined to the M.Phil. and Ph.D. research scholars of various discipline of KUK. Total 180 questionnaires were distributed randomly among the target population out of which 148 were received back. The study shows that all the research scholars use Social Networking Sites (SNSs). It also throws the light on why research scholars of KUK use SNSs, which is the most accessed site, frequency of using it, problem faced while accessing the SNSs and the satisfaction level with the SNSs.

Keywords: Social Networking, Research Scholars, Social Media, Kurukshetra University

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1.0 Introduction

With the advancement in technology new applications emerges for the purpose of communication with one another. One such inquisitive practice gave birth to SNSs. In this era of 21st century social communication has become a trend or the status symbol rather than the necessity. In each and every corner of the world masses use the various number of Social Networking Sites like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram etc. for communicating and sharing information and media with each other.

The history of SNS can be traced from a way back–1995 with the initiation of first social media website 'classmates.com' founded by the Randy Conard which simply link people with each other using e-mail address (Ramesh Chandran, 2010). According to the author the website lacks in creating user profile and friend list which is the main feature of the SNSs. Another SNS emerges in 1997 named "sixdegrees.com" which is the first recognisable SNS as this site presented the opportunity to users in creating profiles and friends lists (Bicen and Cavus, 2010).

Another term web 2.0 introduced in 2004 by Tim O' Reilly and Dale Dougherty due to which enormous software tools emerges which helps user's in social interaction by serving web as a base.

Web 2.0 creates many social tools like "Blogs, RSS (Really Simple Syndication), Instant Messaging, Wiki, Podcasting, Social networking, Photo sharing etc (Khan, 2013). The main aim of the web 2.0 is to introduce a Read/Write web where users can also contribute freely instead of only reading. As a result various social networking sites start emerging gradually time after time.

SNS can be defined as publicly accessible virtual meeting spaces where users present information about them and view information about others. It involves creating ones own profile consisting of personal details and also regarding hobbies, culture, religion, etc for socializing with others. This enable to allow them to share ideas, pictures, posts, interests, and events with people in their network. As said by Vidyakala (2016) social networking service (SNS) is a platform to build social networks or social relations among people who share similar interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections and events through various disseminating

portals like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn etc. Nowdays, SNSs are not a tool for social and economic interaction but it become an educational tools and information source.

Recent studies underline this transformation in academic contexts. Research has shown that scholars increasingly rely on SNSs and Academic Social Networking Sites (ASNSs) such as ResearchGate, Academia.edu, and Google Scholar for communication, collaboration, and access to scholarly literature (Borgohain, 2018; Mondal & Hadagali, 2021; Jain & Makwana, 2022). These platforms support networking with peers, dissemination of research outputs, and awareness of emerging trends. Systematic reviews further suggest that SNSs can positively influence academic engagement and performance when used appropriately (Masalimova et al., 2023). At the same time, studies caution that excessive or unguided use may have implications for well-being, emphasizing the need for balanced and purposeful engagement (Osman, 2025).

In this evolving digital landscape, research scholars represent a critical group whose academic activities are increasingly shaped by SNSs. Understanding how these platforms are used, the purposes they serve, and the challenges faced by scholars is essential for maximizing their educational potential. Against this backdrop, the present study examines the use of Social Networking Sites among M.Phil. and Ph.D. research scholars of Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, with a view to understanding their patterns of use, preferred platforms, purposes, and associated constraints. This investigation seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on the role of SNSs in higher education and to offer insights for improving digital academic practices within the university environment.

2.0 Review of Literature

The recent body of literature highlights the expanding role of social networking sites (SNSs) and academic social networking sites (ASNSs) in higher education and research environments. Borgohain's case study at Dibrugarh University revealed that research scholars increasingly rely on SNSs for both personal and academic purposes, with ResearchGate, Academia.edu, and Facebook emerging as the most preferred platforms for research communication (Borgohain, 2018). Padmavathi and Ramakrishna (2020) found that the majority of research scholars at the ISEC Library were aware of and actively used academic social networking sites for scholarly activities, indicating that these platforms have become part of everyday academic life. Mondal and Hadagali (2021) reported that ResearchGate plays a significant role in building professional networks and exposing scholars to new research trends, with most respondents expressing satisfaction with its performance. Another study at National level conducted by Jain and Makwana (2022) which shows that high awareness and use of ASNSs across NIFT centres in India, particularly Google Scholar, ResearchGate, LinkedIn, and Academia.edu, which were mainly used to access free research literature and connect with fellow researchers.

Mishra and Sharma (2024) demonstrated that postgraduate research students extensively use SNSs such as Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn for academic communication, information sharing, and learning support. From a global perspective, Masalimova et al.(2023) concluded through a systematic review that most studies report a positive relationship between SNS use and academic performance, although excessive or inappropriate use may negatively affect learning outcomes.

Osman's (2025) cross-sectional study further showed that while social media enhances access to information and connectivity, heavy use is associated with mental health concerns such as anxiety, sleep disturbance, and exhaustion among university students.

Galioto et al. (2025) demonstrated that universities can strategically use social networks to strengthen institutional communication and foster a sense of belonging among students through interactive and community-oriented digital engagement.

Collectively, these studies establish that SNSs and ASNSs have become indispensable in contemporary academic and research practices, enhancing scholarly visibility, collaboration, and access to information, while also underscoring the need for guided use and institutional support to ensure their effective and responsible application in higher education (Borgohain, 2018; Mondal & Hadagali, 2021; Jain & Makwana, 2022; Masalimova et al., 2023).

3.0 Objectives:

The objectives of the study are as follows:

   i.   To find out the most used SNSs among the research scholars of KUK.
   ii.   To determine the purpose of using SNSs by research scholars of KUK.
   iii.   To know the frequency of using SNSs by research scholars of KUK.
   iv.   To find out the most used tools for accessing SNSs
   v.   To explore the satisfaction level gained from SNSs.
   vi.   To identify the problems faced by the research scholars while using SNSs.

4.0 Methodology
The scope of the present study was confined to the M. Phil. and Ph. D. scholars who were pursuing research in different disciplines of KUK. Survey method was adopted to conduct this research. A detailed questionnaire was prepared keeping in view of the objectives and scope. Total 180 questionnaires were distributed randomly among the target population. Out of which 147 were-received back. The collected data has been recorded in MS Excel and percentage method was adopted to analyze the data which has been presented in the form of tables and figures.

5.0 Data Analysis

Table 5.1: Course wise distribution of the Respondents

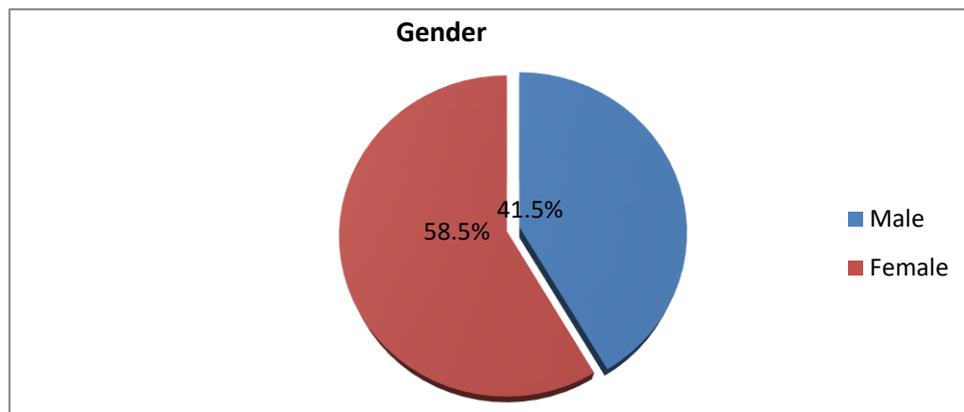| Sr. No	Gender	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Male	61	41.50
2.	Female	86	58.50
	Total	147	100

Figure 5.1: Course wise distribution of Respondents

Table 5.1 and Fig 5.1 provides gender wise distribution of the respondents which indicate that 61 respondents (i.e. 41.50%) are male and 86 respondents (i.e. 58.50%) are females.

Table 5.2 Courses Pursued By The Respondents

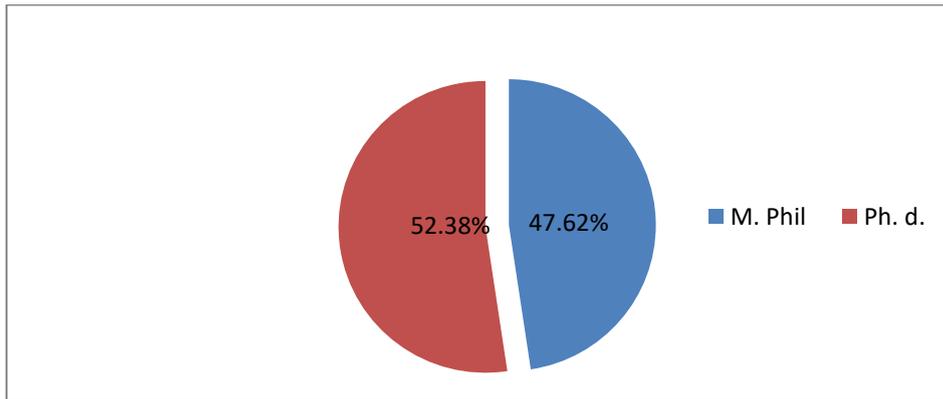| Sr. No.	Courses	Respondents	Percentage
1.	M. Phil	70	47.62
2.	Ph. D.	77	52.38
	Total	147	100

Table 5.2 and Fig 5.2. show the courses pursued by the respondents covered under the study. Out of 147 respondents 70 respondents (i.e. 47.62%) are pursuing M.Phil. and 77 respondents (i.e. 52.38%) are pursuing Ph.D.

Table 5.3: Purpose of Using SNSs

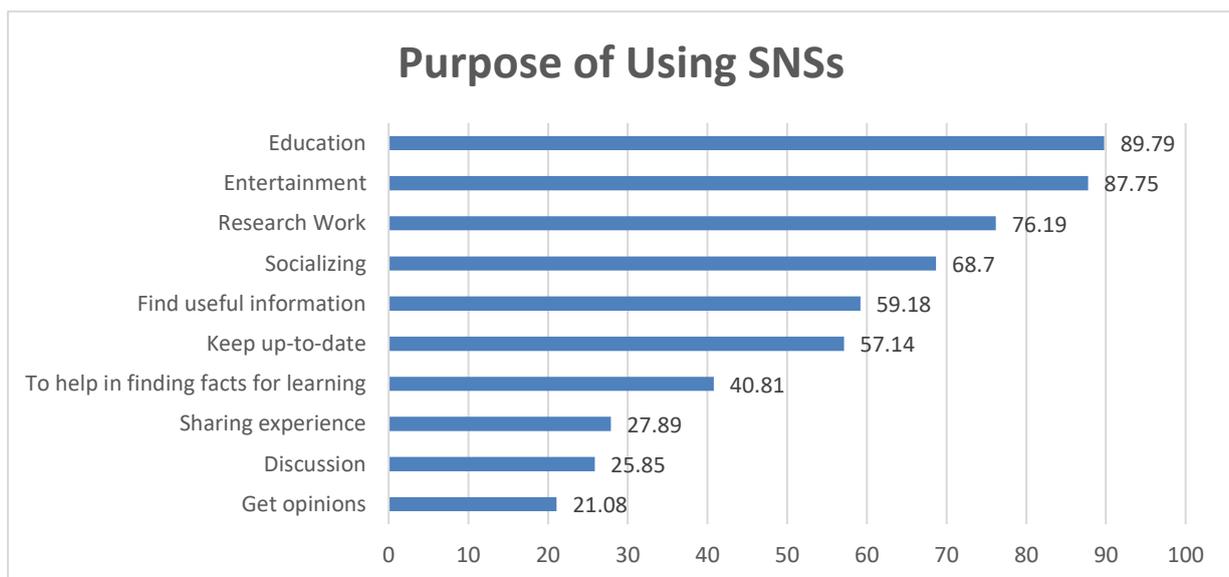| Sr. No.	Purpose of Using SNSs	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Education	132	89.79
2.	Entertainment	129	87.75
3.	Research Work	112	76.19
4.	Socializing	101	68.70
5.	Find useful information	87	59.18
6.	Discussion	38	25.85
7.	Get opinions	31	21.08
8.	Keep up-to-date	84	57.14
9.	Sharing experience	41	27.89
10.	To help in finding facts for learning	60	40.81
11.	Other	4	2.72

Figure 5.3: Purpose of Using SNSs

Table 5.3 & Fig. 5.3. highlights the purpose of using SNSs. Maximum no. of 132 (i.e. 89.79%) respondents are

using SNSs for 'education' purpose followed by 129 respondents (i.e. 87.75%) who are using it for 'entertainment' purpose and 112 respondents (i.e. 76.19%) are using SNS for 'research work', whereas 04 respondents (i.e. 2.72%) are using it for other reasons like 'for upgrading computer skills' and 'getting news about employment'.

Table 5.4: Most preferred SNSs

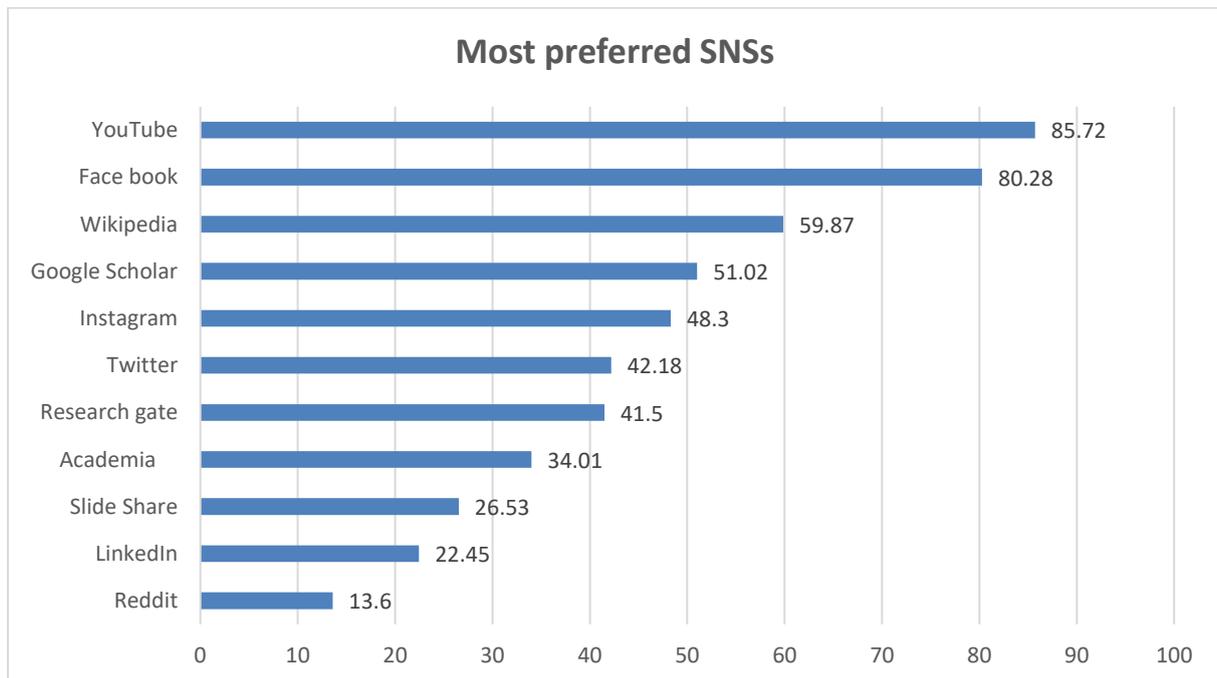| Sr. No.	Most preferred SNSs	Respondents	Percentage
1	Face book	118	80.28
2	Twitter	62	42.18
3	Instagram	71	48.3
4	Reddit	20	13.6
5	Research gate	61	41.5
6	Wikipedia	88	59.87
7	Slide Share	39	26.53
8	Academia	50	34.01
9	Google Scholar	75	51.02
10	YouTube	126	85.72
11	LinkedIn	33	22.45
12	other	9	6.13

Figure: 5.4 Most preferred SNSs

Table 5.4 and Fig 5.4. shows the most preferred SNSs by the research scholars of Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra. It depicts that majority of the respondents i.e. 126 (85.72%) are preferred to use 'YouTube' followed by 118 (i.e. 80.28%), 88 (i.e. 59.87%) and 75 (i.e. 51.02%) respondents who preferred using 'Facebook' , 'Wikipedia' and 'Google Scholar' respectively. However very less number of respondents i.e. 09

(6.13%) preferred to use other social networking sites like Quora, ORCID, Mendeley and Publons.

Table 5.5: Period of using SNSs

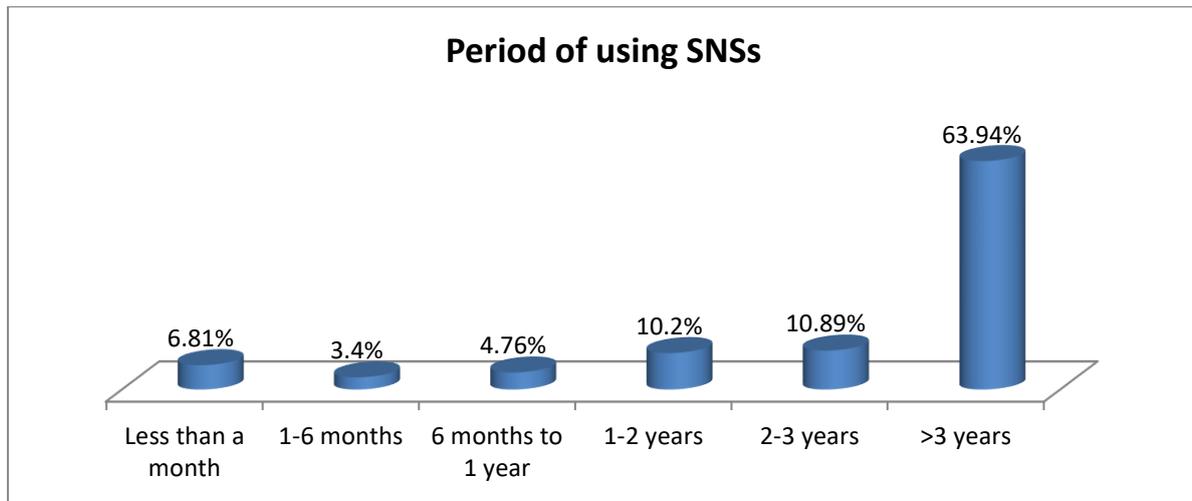| Sr. No.	Period of using SNSs	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Less than a month	10	6.81
2.	1-6 months	05	3.40
3.	6 months to 1 year	07	4.76
4.	1-2 years	15	10.20
5.	2-3 years	16	10.89
6.	>3 years	94	63.94
	Total	147	100

Figure 5.5: Period of using SNSs

Table 5.5 Fig. 5.5 shows the period of using SNSs by the researchers. It shows that maximum no. of 94 respondents (i.e. 63.94%) are using SNSs since more than three years , followed by 16 respondents (i.e. 10.89%) who are using SNS from two to three years whereas least number of respondents i.e. 05 (i.e. 3.40%) has started using SNS's from one to six months only.

Table 5.6: Frequency to visit SNSs*:*

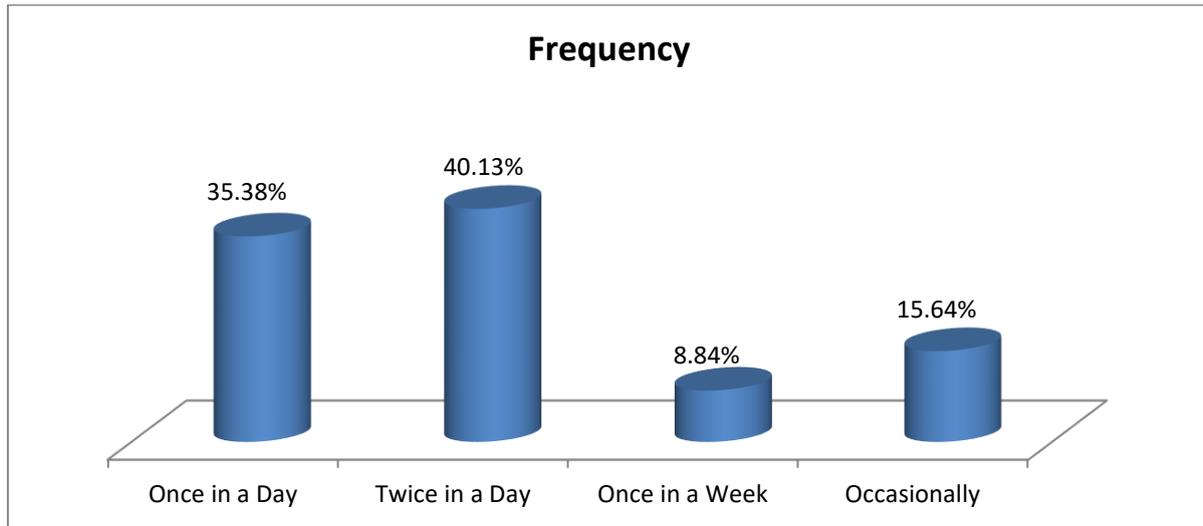| Sr. No.	Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Once in a Day	52	35.38
2.	Twice in a Day	59	40.13
3.	Once in a Week	13	8.84
4.	Occasionally	23	15.64
	Total	147	

Figure 5.6: Frequency to visit SNSs*:*

Table 5.6. Fig. 5.6. shows the frequency of visiting SNSs by the researchers. It shows that maximum no. of 59 respondents (i.e.40.13%) visit SNSs twice a day, followed by 52 respondents (i.e. 35.38%) who visit once a day, 23 respondents (i.e. 15.64%) visit occasionally whereas very less no. of respondents i.e.13 (8.84%) visit the SNS's once a week.

Table 5.7: Use of Computing devices to access SNSs

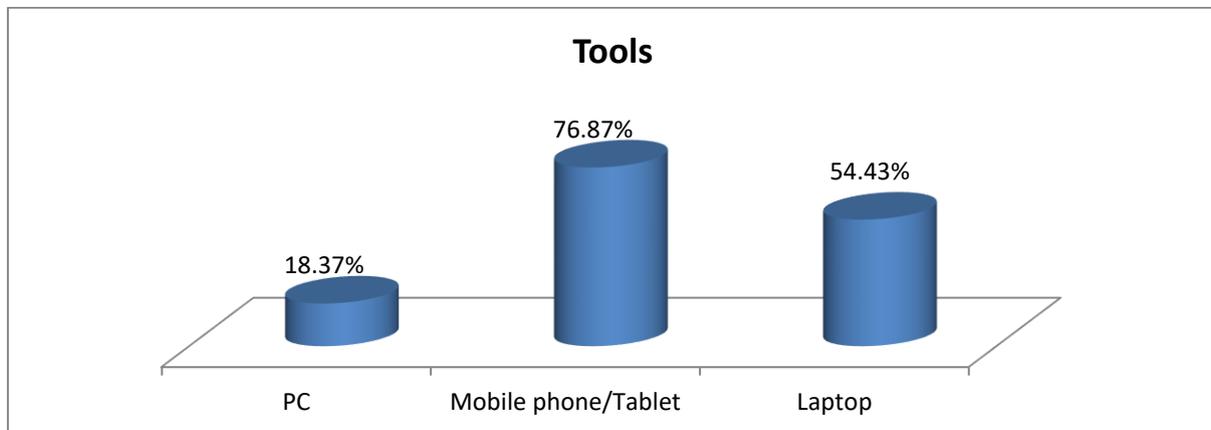| Sr. No.	Tools	Respondents	Percentage
1.	PC	27	18.37
2.	Mobile phone/Tablet	113	76.87
3.	Laptop	80	54.43

Figure 5.7: Use of Computing devices to access SNSs

Table 5.7 and Figure 5.7 shows the computing devices that are being used for accessing SNSs. Majority of the 113 respondents (i.e. 76.87%) are using Mobile Phone/Tablet for accessing these sites followed by 80 respondents (i.e. 54.43%)who are using Laptop while 27 respondents (18.37%) are using PC for accessing Social Networking Sites.

Table 5.8: Places of accessing of SNSs

Sr. No.	Places	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Library	84	57.14

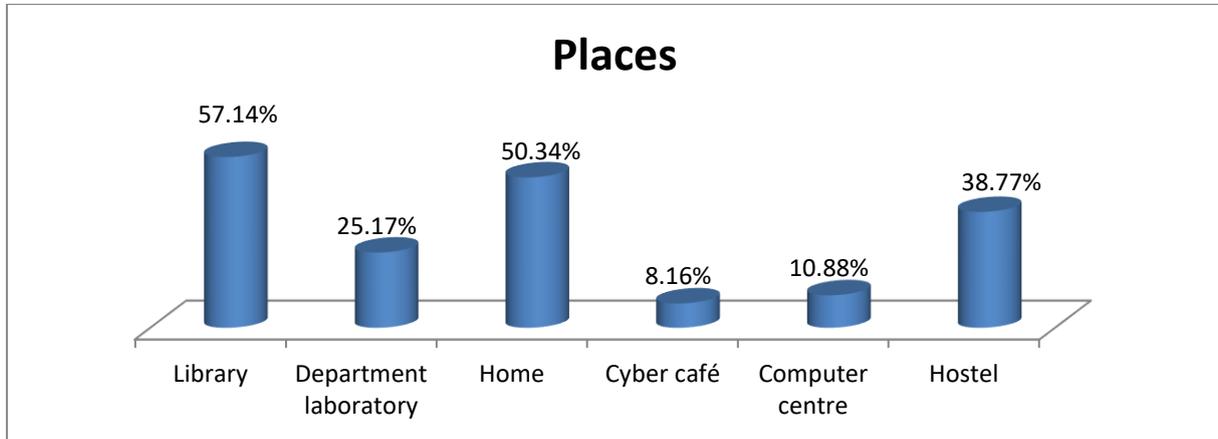| 2.	Department laboratory	37	25.17
3.	Home	74	50.34
4.	Cyber cafe	12	8.16
5.	Computer center	16	10.88
6.	Hostel	57	38.77

Figure 5.8: Places of accessing of SNSs

Table 5.8 and Figure 5.8. shows the place of accessing SNSs by the research scholars. Majority of the 84 respondents (i.e. 57.14%) are accessing SNSs from library followed by 74 respondents (i.e. 50.34%) accessing from their home, 57 respondents (i.e. 38.77%) accessing from their Hostel 37 respondents (i.e. 25.17%) accessing from their Departmental computer lab.. However least number of 12 respondents (i.e. 8.16%) are accessing SNSs from cyber café.

Table 5.9: Ease of use SNS

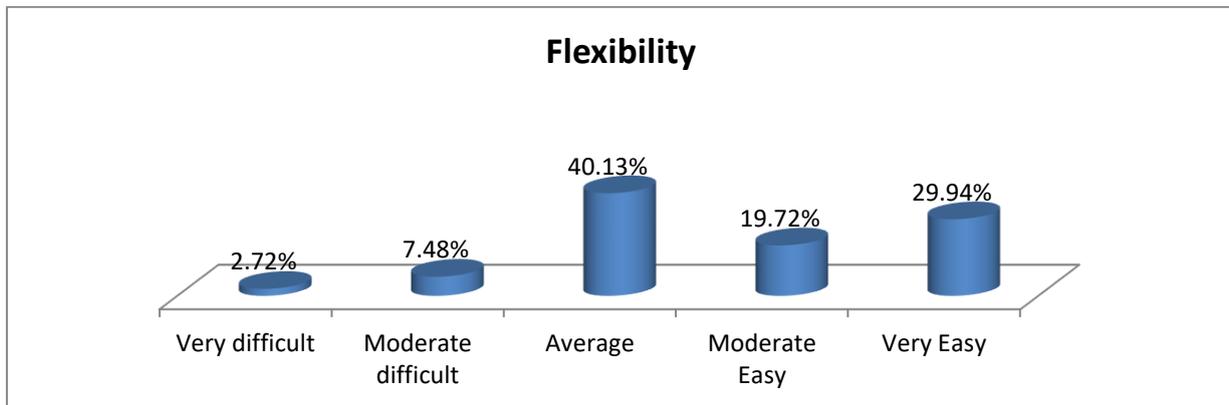| Sr. No.	Flexibility	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Very difficult	4	2.72
2.	Moderate difficult	11	7.48
3.	Average	59	40.13
4.	Moderate Easy	29	19.72
5.	Very Easy	44	29.94

Figure: 5.9: Ease of use SNS

Table 5.9 and Figure 5.9 shows the ease of use SNSs among research scholars. Majority of 44 respondents (i.e.29.94%) find SNSs very easy to access, followed by 59 respondents (i.e. 40.13%) who find accessing SNS average whereas minimum number of 04 respondents (i.e. 2.72%) find accessing of SNSs very difficult.

Table 5.10: Problems faced while using Social Networking Sites

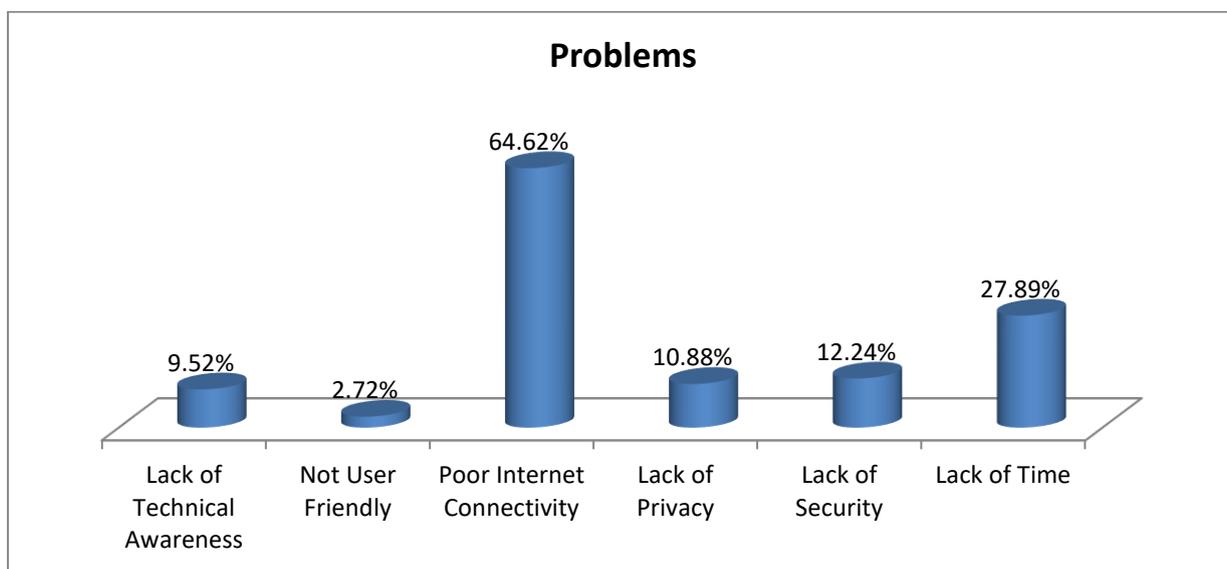| Sr. No.	Problems	Respondents	Percentage
1.	**Lack of Technical Awareness**	14	9.52
2.	**Not User Friendly**	04	2.72
3.	**Poor Internet Connectivity**	95	64.62
4.	**Lack of Privacy**	16	10.88
5.	**Lack of Security**	18	12.24
6.	**Lack of Time**	41	27.89

Figure 5.10: Problems faced while using Social Networking Sites

Table 5.10 and Figure 5.10 shows the problems faced by the respondents while using SNSs. Majority of 95 respondents (i.e. 64.62%) pointed out poor connectivity of internet as the main problem while accessing SNS followed by 41 respondents (i.e.27.89%) who don't find sufficient time for accessing the SNS, 18 respondents (12.24%) find lack of security is one of the problem faced while accessing the SNS whereas least number of 04 respondents (i.e. 2.72%) find SNS less user friendly.

Table 5.11: Satisfaction from use of SNSs

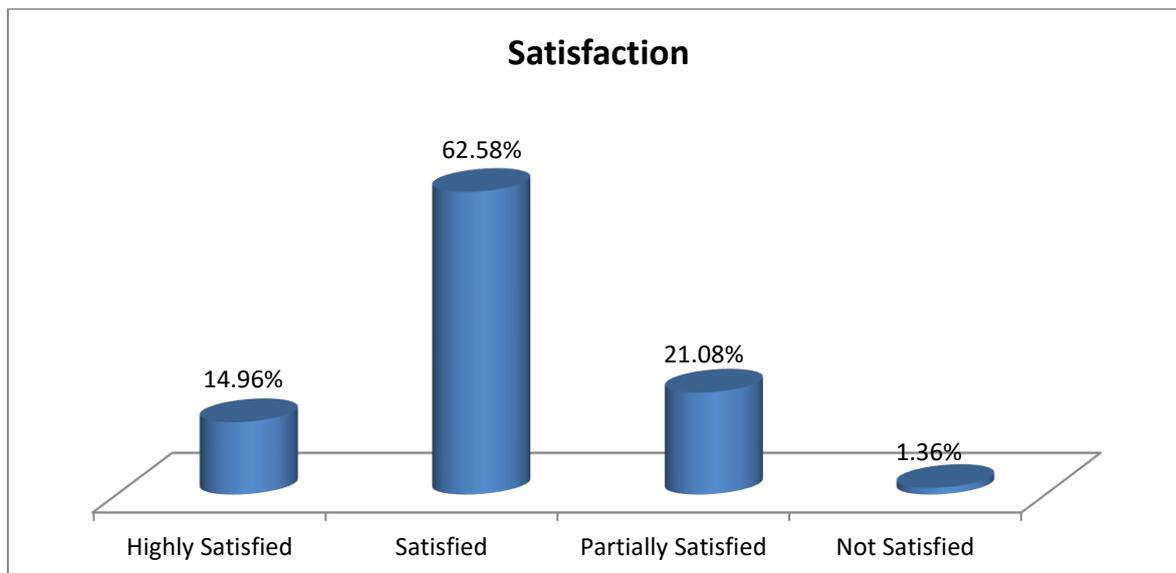| Sr. No.	Satisfaction	Respondents	Percentage
1.	**Highly Satisfied**	22	14.96
2.	**Satisfied**	92	62.58
3.	**Partially Satisfied**	31	21.08
4.	**Not Satisfied**	02	1.36
	Total	147	100

Figure 5.11: Satisfaction from use of SNSs

Table 5.11 and Figure 5.11 presents the satisfaction level of respondents using SNSs. Here out of 147 respondents, majority of 92 respondents (i.e. 62.58%) are satisfied with the use of SNS, followed by 31 respondents (i.e. 21.08%) who are partially satisfied and 22 respondents (i.e.14.96%) who are highly satisfied whereas only 02 respondents (i.e.1.36%) are not satisfied while using SNSs.

6.0 Conclusion

The main aim of the research is to examine the use of SNSs among the M.Phil. and Ph.D. research scholars of Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra and the findings clearly demonstrate the central role these platforms now play in academic life. The study reveals that all the research scholars use SNSs and majority of the research scholars i.e. 89.79% use SNSs for the purpose of education. The findings shows that YouTube was the most used SNSs as preferred by 85.72% research scholars for educational videos, followed 80.28% research scholars who preferred to use Facebook. Majority of 57.14% research scholars access SNSs from library. The satisfaction level of research scholars using SNSs shows that maximum no. of 62.58% were satisfied with the use of SNS. It is suggested that the University should improve the internet facility as majority of the 64.62% research scholars pointed out that poor connectivity of internet was the main problem while accessing SNS.

In conclusion, this study reveals a strong need for continuous awareness among research scholar about the growing importance of social media in modern library services and effective information delivery. There is a clear requirement for more awareness programmes such as conferences, workshops, seminars, and hands-on training sessions to stimulate new ideas and help scholars fully understand the vast potential of social media tools. As information and communication technologies continue to evolve, research scholar must be willing to learn, unlearn, and relearn in order to keep pace with changing platforms and practices, making regular and adequate training essential. University libraries should therefore provide a supportive environment through reliable internet connectivity, stable power supply, and clear institutional policies to guide and encourage the use of social media. Moreover, access to social media tools should be strengthened through high-speed internet facilities, enabling research scholar to efficiently explore and utilize the wide range of information available across multiple platforms.

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