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DIGITAL HUMANITIES IN INDIA: A DEVELOPING COUNTRY PERSPECTIVE

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USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (SNS) BY LIS PROFESSIONALS TO BUILD PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY – A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Social Networking Sites (SNS) allows the users to create, share and consume the contents created by other users for leisure and recreational activity, it has a professional use too. In this paper an attempt has been made to find out the Use of Social Networking Sites (SNS) being made by LIS professional for building professional competency. For this purpose an online questionnaire was developed on Google forms and the questionnaire was sent to Indian Listserv namely LIS – Forum, NMLIS and ILOSC to note responses and total 85 responses were received. The study finds that majority of the LIS professionals are aware of SNS application as well as they are having their own accounts too, they are also active on SNS. The study also finds that most of the LIS professionals played an important role in sharing useful contents online. The study highlights the kind of contents being exchanged by them. The study highlights the needs to leverage the creation of content by LIS professionals to maximum extent for the benefit of LIS professionals.

Keyword: Social Networking Sites, SNS, LIS Professionals, Professional competency, Content.

1. INTRODUCTION

SNS enables interactive communication to take place; it is a form of Web 2.0. SNS tools allow one to remain in contacts with close friends, family and relatives it also enable to stay in contact with peer members. SNS has become an integral part of every one's life. There has been several studies conducted on usefulness of SNS in libraries by LIS professionals. Most of the SNS are used for the purpose of Marketing of Library Products and Services [1]. SNS tools are also available in the form of Mobile application which has made possible its wide proliferation in human life. There are a number of SNS among it the most popular one are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Instagram, Blog, RSS, MySpace, Wiki, Flickr etc are some to name a few. LIS professionals are invariably making use of some. SNS has provided an excellent platform to stay in touch with fellow LIS professionals for updating knowledge and skills which has been necessitated due to technological innovations, these innovations impacts the change of roles, necessity of updating competencies, skills and knowledge requirement by LIS professionals [2]. LIS professionals are responding to the popularity of SNS and are expanding their roles in the creation, use, and sharing of information by interacting with LIS professionals [3]. The aim of this paper is to find out which SNS the LIS professionals are aware of, on which they have account, whether the LIS professionals have subscribed, following or member of any SNS group, their roles as content creator, sharer or consumer as well as the kind of professional content they create, share or receive.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Uplaonkar and Badiger (2018) in their paper had done a study of Awareness of social media among the LIS professionals in the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, Karnataka. The study received 100 responses, Facebook was mostly used as the response indicated, most of the users makes use of Social Media daily, maximum number of users are making use of Social Media for keeping abreast of the latest news and commentaries, 60 % of LIS professionals agree that social media proved helpful in making awareness, 52% LIS professionals agreed that Social media works as a platform to interact beyond barrier, 53% LIS professionals indicated that they are satisfied in using Social Media sites and major problem in using Social media is lack of time [4].

Weerasinghe and Hindagolla (2018) had done a study to understand perspectives of University Librarian of Sri Lanka with regard to Use of SNS by library academics in workplace. Online and Offline questionnaires were distributed to 124 LIS professionals and out of that 116 duly filled questionnaires were received back. The maximum experience in using SNS is 1-5 years (44.8%), the frequency of use few times a week 23 (19.8%) is highest whereas do not use at all is 25 (21.6%), 52.6% believe that they have adequate skill to use SNS, on Facebook most LIS professionals (89.7%) have personal account as well as it is most frequently used SNS at

workplace, SNS is used for both professional and personal purpose 75 (64.7%) by maximum LIS professionals, in terms of both professional and personal purpose it is used for interacting and for maintaining contact, SNS access to maximum LIS professional is available at workplace, there is a positive user perception towards benefits of SNS at workplace [6].

Kaushik (2016) in his paper has done a survey of Use of social networking sites tools and services by LIS professionals for libraries, for this purpose he has distributed questionnaire to 100 LIS professionals on their personal emails. The study finds that majority of LIS professionals (97.5%) are aware of SNS tools and services, the source to know about SNS tools and services as indicated by majority of LIS professionals (60%) is by internet/search engine. Most of the LIS professionals indicated that they are using SNS tools and services from more than 4 years and they use such tools in several times in a day, about 65% LIS professionals indicated that they don't have any Social Networking policy in place. The reasons indicated by majority of LIS professionals (83.7%) shows that they use SNS for interacting with users and for getting feedback from the users. Most of the LIS professionals are using SNS tools for Marketing of library services and products and the barriers in using SNS tools are lack of credibility as indicated. Facebook is most widely used and LIS professionals indicated that will fully utilize SNS tools in future [1].

Priolkar and Kumbhar (2014) had done a study to make aware of Use of social networking sites by library professionals of institute libraries. A well structured questionnaire was distributed to 10 Government institute and out of that 7 institutions 25 library professionals responded. The frequency of daily usage of SNS is highest at 72%, the maximum time spent in accessing SNS is 0-30 minutes, Facebook is most frequently used SNS by library professionals, maximum 21 library professionals (42%) use SNS for chatting, most of the library professionals 22 (34%) gets study related information from SNS, the study shows that 19 (76%) library professionals responded that is having greater impact, for library professional SNS use as indicated is by 24 (96%) respondents, LinkedIn 25 (33%) is the most preferred SNS for library professionals followed by Facebook 24 (32%) [5].

Bharadwaj (2014) in his paper has done a study to find the Use of social networking sites made by LIS professionals in higher education institutes in India. For data collection an online questionnaire with 14 structured questions was distributed to 192 LIS professionals which includes working librarians, deputy librarians, and assistant librarians working in higher education institutions of India. The time spent on Internet and SNS is 1-3 hours daily by 78 (40.6%) LIS professionals others spend more time comparatively, maximum respondent i.e. 45 (23.4%) have 10 to 49 friends others have different numbers of friends and 187 (71.9%) have subscribed to the varying number of LIS groups on SNS only 5 have not subscribed to any group, 149 LIS professionals are members of both official and unofficial group of their institution only 43 LIS professionals are not member of any SNS group of their institutions. LIS professionals use SNS groups for various purposes like socializing, keeping up to date, job advertisements, update about field of study, whereas some only observe and occasionally upload

family photographs. The specific reason for using SNS as indicated by LIS professionals include community news update, relevant, active and interesting community, for making new useful connections and to express in virtual environment, 122 respondent use SNS to connect with students and 70 didn't use for it. More than 50% LIS professionals find SNS easy to use; Facebook is most widely used SNS, about 50% respondents learn about SNS in conferences, workshop and training programs, 102 learned about using SNS on their own, 69 learned with help from friends and 21 remaining learned from colleagues and family members. A mixed response was received about usefulness of SNS in library, 184 expressed their satisfaction in using SNS only 8 expressed dissatisfaction. All have enabled Web 2.0 library online resources; all have expressed legitimate concern in using SNS to some level [7].

3. WHAT IS PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY?

For the LIS professionals Professional Competency relates to the special librarian knowledge in the areas of information resources, information access, technology, management and research and the ability to make use of these areas of knowledge as a means for providing library and information services. Professional competencies is divided into four important competencies, each is supported with specific skills i.e. 1) Managing information organizations 2) Managing information resources 3) Managing information services 4) Applying information tools and technologies [8].

According to Dictionary of Management (2006), "Competence is a state or quality of being able to take specified action without referring to other people, or without gaining special authorization, or without violating rules about who may take this action". Also, competencies are the set of abilities needed to perform a role in the organization [9].

Competency Index for the Library Field 2014 compiled by WebJunction is a valuable resource for the libraries since its introduction in 2009, the Competency Index were compiled from input from a spectrum of library practitioners and leaders, and from competencies defined by other library organizations, update to the original Competency index were made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services grant. Core technology skills and strong personal/interpersonal skills are the fundamental essential library competencies for LIS professionals; other required broad competencies are Library collection, Library management, Public service, IT and System technology [10].

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To find out which SNS the LIS professionals are aware of and on which they have registered account.
- ii. To find out whether the LIS professionals have subscribed to or are following or member of any professional group on any SNS.

- iii. To find out the role played by LIS professionals on SNS with regard to content and the type of professional content either created or shared or received by LIS professionals

5. METHODOLOGY

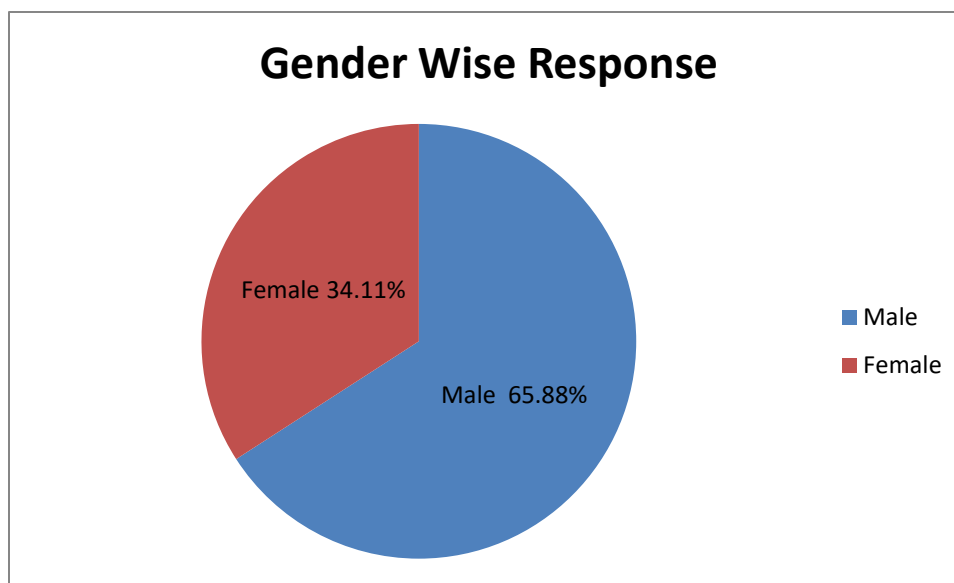
For data collection an online questionnaire was designed on Google forms and the questionnaire was distributed to Indian Listserv namely LIS-Forum, ILOSC and NMLIS to collect data. Total 85 responses were received. The questionnaire was made available for noting responses from 8th January 2021 to 22nd January 2021. The questionnaire comprised of 11 questions in which 4 multiple choice and 7 single choice questions were incorporated. The collected data is analyzed in the following section.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

The questionnaire comprised of 11 questions but out of that only 9 questions were considered fit for data analysis as the remaining two questions were relating with Name and email address which were included to just to express thanks to the respondents. The first four questions were about demographic details of respondent and the remaining five were related with the study. The data was analyzed using MS-Excel 2007 and the data analysis is presented in the following sections:

6.1 Gender

The questionnaire received response from 56 Males and 29 Females, the response from Male constitute 65.88% whereas the response from Female constitutes 34.11%. Figure 1 shows Gender wise response.



6.2 Designation

The questionnaire received response from 16 different Designation holding LIS professionals and also includes one response from Unemployed LIS professional; maximum response was received from College Librarian 55 (64.70%). The responses received from other designations are College Assistant Librarian 1 (1.17%), College Library Assistant 2 (2.35%), University Librarian 1 (1.17%), Assistant Librarian 10 (11.76%), Research Scholar 3 (3.52%), Documentalist 1 (1.17%), Assistant Professor 1 (1.17%), Library Assistant 1 (1.17%), School Librarian 3 (3.52%), Senior Librarian 1 (1.17%), Research Fellow 1 (1.17%), Library Attendant 1 (1.17%), Unemployed 1 (1.17%), Librarian 1 (1.17%), Junior Research Fellow 1 (1.17%), Librarian in NGO 1 (1.17%). Figure 2 shows Designation wise response with approximate values in percentage.

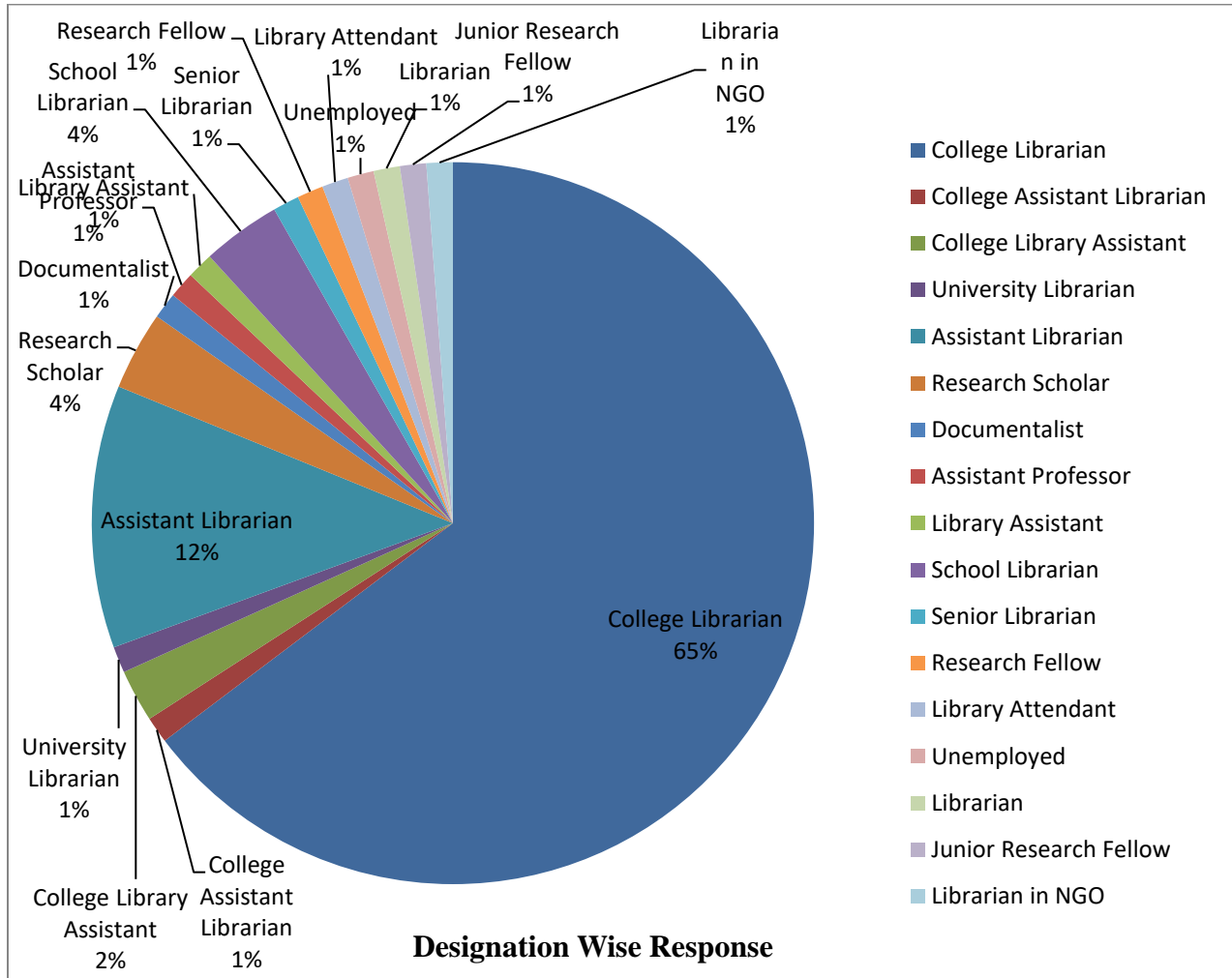


Figure 2: Designation wise response

6.3 Educational Qualification

The questionnaire received response from 6 different Educational Qualification holding respondents. Maximum response was received from MLIS degree holder 48 (56.47%), followed by MPhil 14 (16.47%), PhD 12 (14.11%), MLIS with NET/SET 9 (10.58%), BLIS 1 (1.17%), PhD Pursuing 1 (1.17%). Figure 3 shows the response received by Educational Qualification.

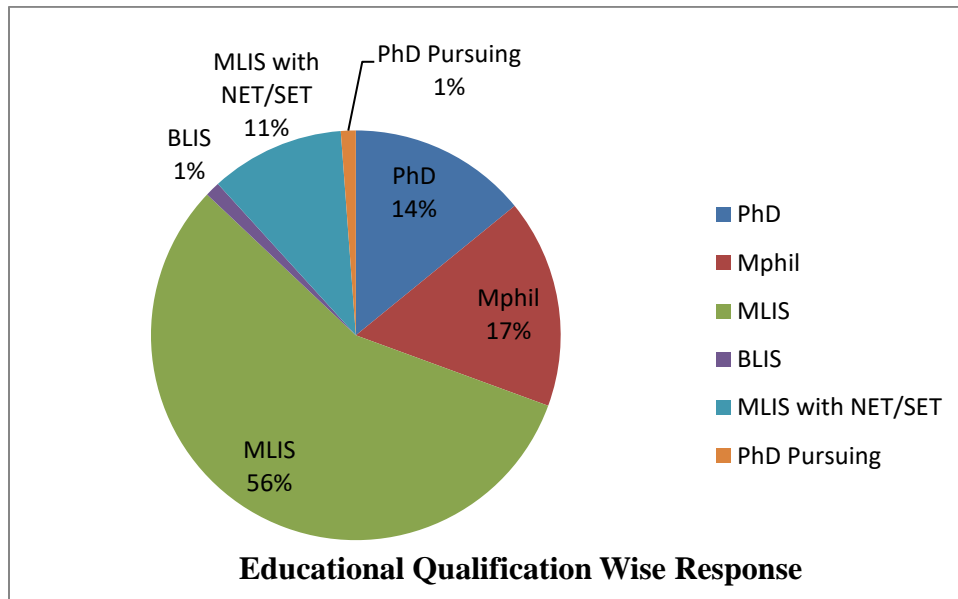


Figure 3: Educational Qualification wise response

6.4 Age Group

The questionnaire received response from 4 different Age Groups. The response received from 21-30 age group 21 (24.70%), 31-40 age group 42 (49.41%), 41-50 age group 19 (22.35 %), 51-60 age group 3 (3.52%). Figure 4 shows response received by Age Group.

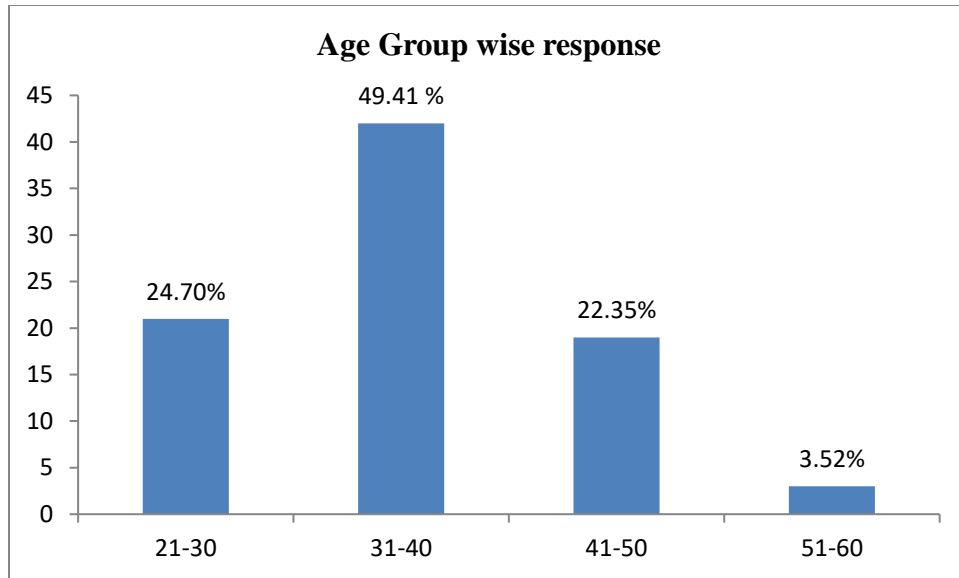


Figure 4: Age Group wise response

6.5 SNS awareness

The question which Social Networking Sites (SNS) you are aware of was asked. The question provided 5 responses to record with other option to record response and total 12 responses were received in total. As the question allowed noting multiple responses total 355 responses were received. Most of the users are aware of WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter and other SNS. The responses received are shown in following Figure 5.

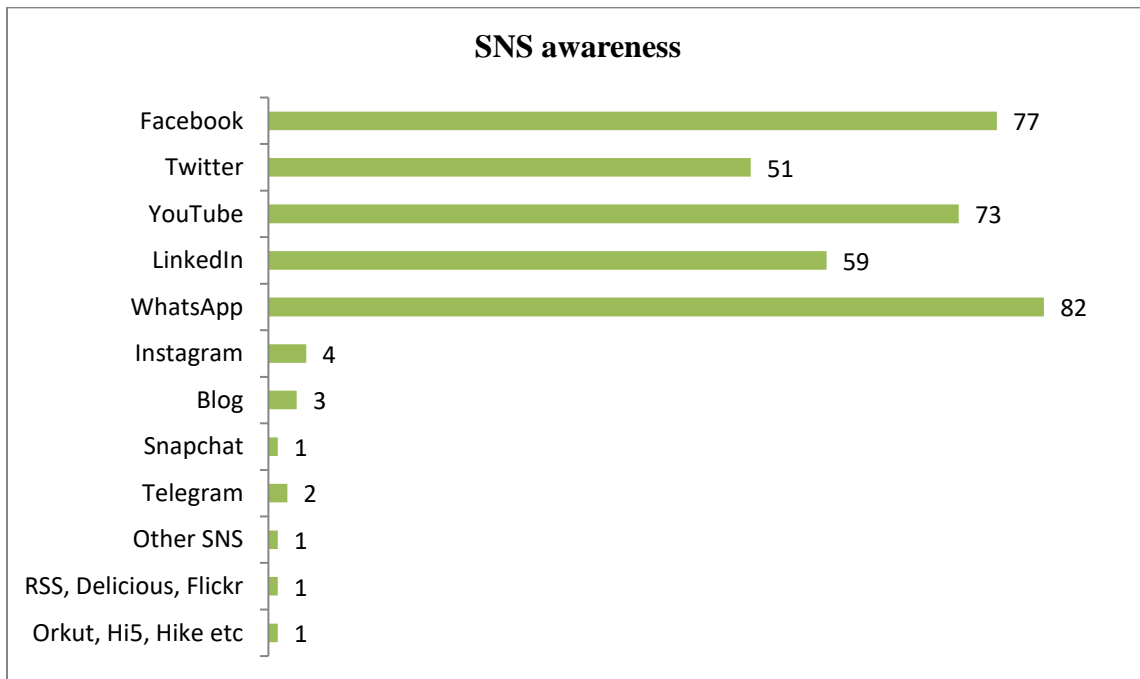


Figure 5: SNS awareness

6.6 SNS registered account

The question on which SNS you have a registered account was asked. The question provided 5 responses to record but it received total 10 responses as the other option allowed to note responses. As the question allowed multiple responses to record total 302 responses were received. Figure 6 shows the response received, which shows that WhatsApp is the SNS on which maximum users have registered their account followed by Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter and others. Surprisingly 1 user has not registered on any SNS.

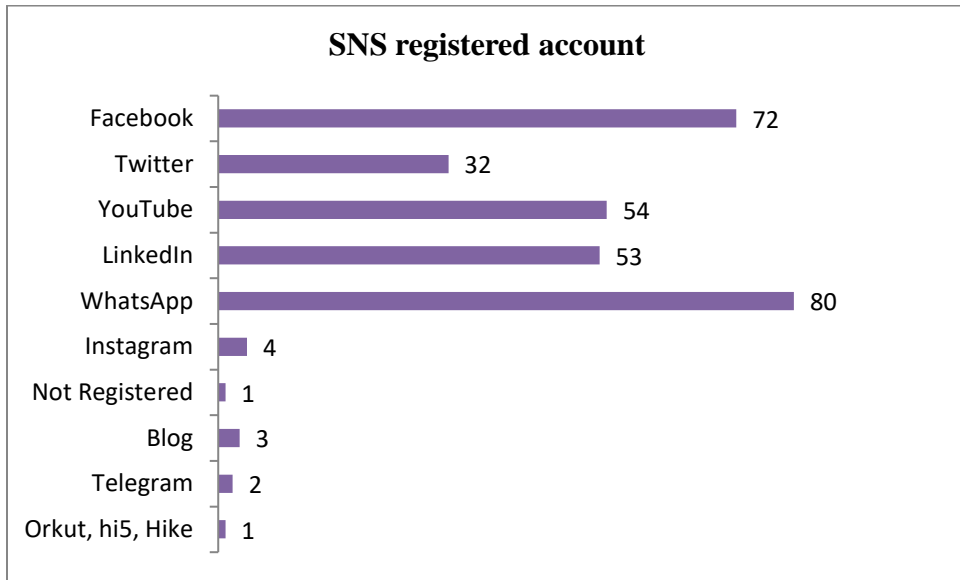


Figure 6: SNS registered account

6.7 Subscriber/Follower/Member of any SNS

The question Have you subscribed to or are following or member of any professional SNS was asked. The Yes response received 71 (83.52%) responses and No response received 14 (16.47%) response. Figure 7 shows the response received.

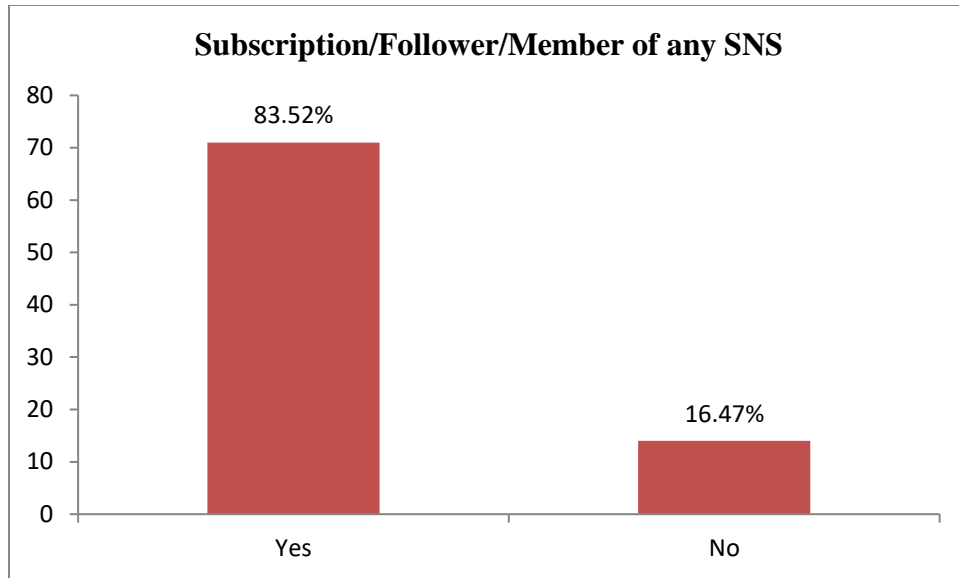


Figure 7: Subscription/Follower/Member of any SNS

6.8 Role as LIS Professional

The question what is your role as LIS Professional was asked. The role as Content creator received 29, Content consumer received 49, Content Sharer 65 responses. As multiple responses were allowed to note total 143 responses were received. Figure 8 shows the response received.

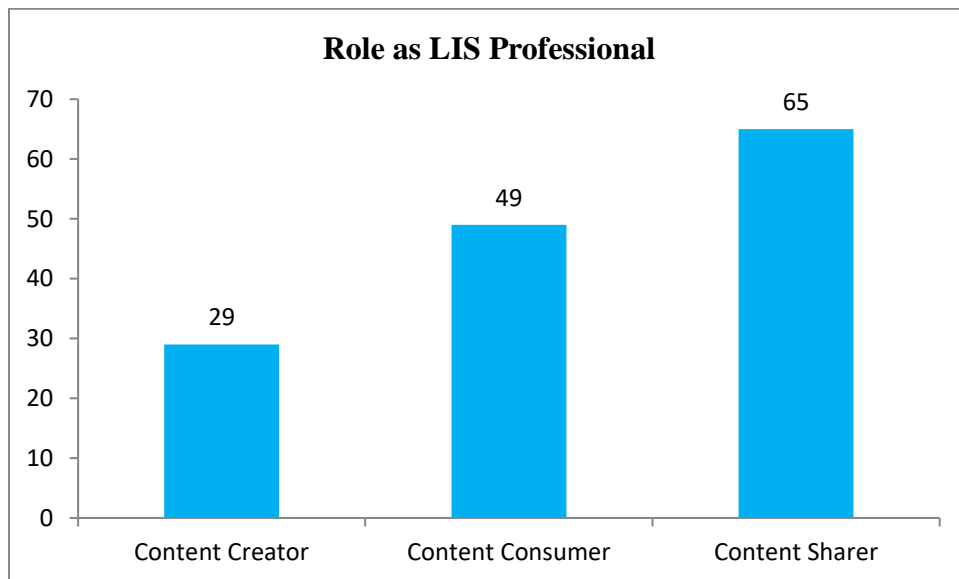


Figure 8: Role as LIS professional

6.9 Professional content Create/Share/Receive

The question which type of professional content generally you create or receive or share on SNS was asked. The questionnaire provided 4 responses to note with other option which allowed

recording more responses. Total 232 responses were received. One response of Not sharing any professional content on SNS was also received. Figure 9 shows the responses received.

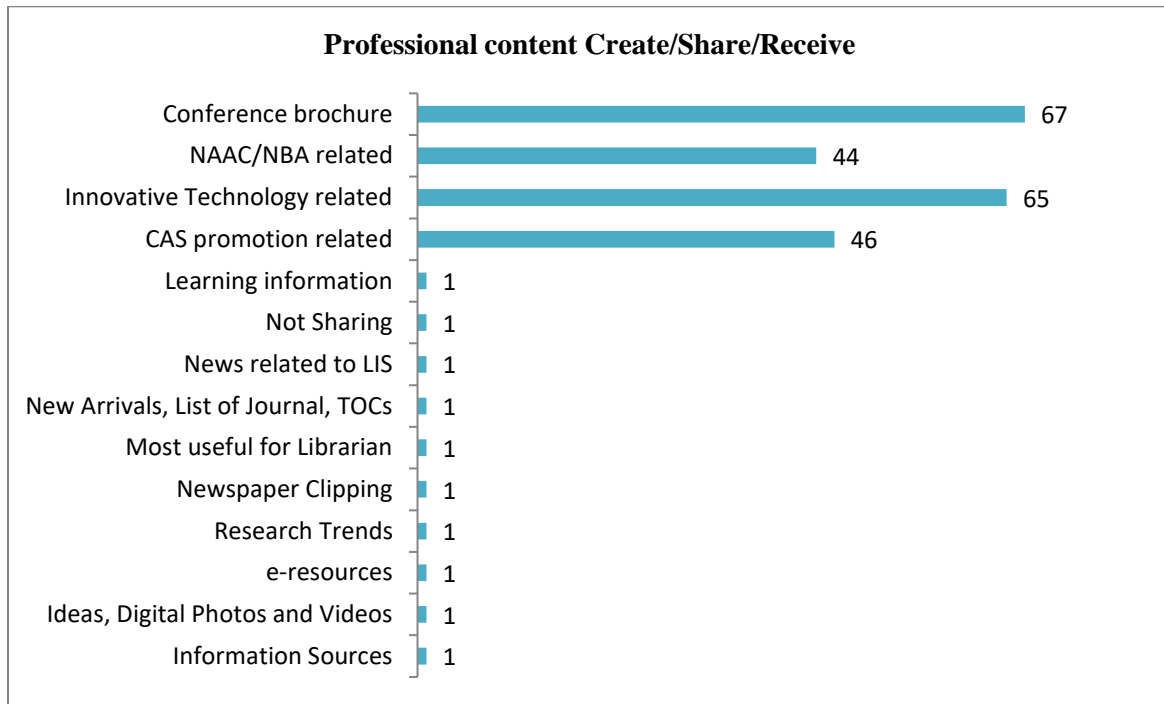


Figure 9: Professional content Create/Share/Receive

7. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The study highlights some important findings which explain the relationship between user behaviour of different age groups, the findings are mentioned below:

- In the 21-30 age group 14 Male and 7 Females participated in the survey. Of these maximum participants i.e. 9 were College Librarian which included 7 Male and 2 Female participants all with MLIS degree as highest qualification. 5 Male Assistant Librarian were second largest respondents. 17 respondents have either subscribed to or following or member of any LIS professional group on any SNS whereas 4 have not subscribed or following or member of any group. 3 LIS professionals act as content consumer and 5 as content sharer only where as 7 act as content consumer and content sharer, 4 as content creator, consumer and sharer and 2 as content creator and sharer only.
- In the 31-40 age group 28 Male and 14 Female participated in the survey. Of these maximum participation in the survey was by 29 College Librarian which included 18 Male and 11 Female respondents followed by 4 Assistant Librarian, 2 College Library Assistant, 1 Documentalist, 1 Junior Research Fellow, 1 Librarian in NGO, 1 Library Assistant, 1 unemployed and 1 Research fellow and 1 Research Scholar. The highest educational qualification is as 24 MLIS degree holder, 7 MPhil holders, 5 PhDs, 4 MLIS with NET/SET, 1 BLIS and 1 MA and MLIS. 37 respondents have either subscribed,

following or member of any LIS professional group on SNS whereas 4 have not subscribed, following or member of any such group on SNS. The role played by LIS professionals on SNS is as: 11 as content consumer, 2 as content creator, 10 as content sharer, 4 as content consumer and sharer, 2 as content creator and consumer, 9 as content creator, consumer and sharer and 4 as content creator and sharer.

- In the 41-50 age group 12 Male and 7 Female participated in the survey. Of these maximum participation was by 15 College Librarian which consist of response by 9 Male and 6 Females. 1 response from each respondent was received from designation holders Assistant Professor, Senior Librarian, Assistant Librarian and College Assistant Librarian. 14 respondents have subscribed, following or member of any professional LIS group whereas 5 have not subscribed, following or member of any such groups. Maximum respondents i.e. 10 responded their role as Content sharer 2 as content consumer, 2 as content consumer and sharer, 4 as content creators, consumer and sharer and 1 as content creator and sharer. Highest educational qualification response was from 7 MPhil holders, 5 MLIS, 4 PhDs and 3 MLIS with NET/SET.
- In the 51-60 age group only 2 Male and 1 Female participated in the survey. Of this 2 were PhD holder and 1 was MLIS, also 2 were content sharer and 1 played a mix role as content creator, sharer and consumer. As well as all have subscribed to or following or member of the LIS professional group on SNS. 1 response was received from University Librarian and 2 responses were received from College Librarian.
- The overall response received from all age groups regarding their role as LIS professional on SNS is as: 16 act as content consumer, 2 as content creator, 27 as content sharer, 13 as content consumer and sharer, 2 as content creator and consumer, 18 as content creator, consumer and sharer and 7 as content creator and sharer.

8. CONCLUSION

The SNS tools are an important asset for the professional development of LIS professionals. It offers an environment where the users can Create, Share or Receive the content for professional development also. The study finds that almost all the LIS professional surveyed are aware of SNS and all are having their registered account on SNS except one. Nearly 71 (83.52%) have subscribed or following or member of some SNS professional group. As it is observed the majority of LIS professional are sharing the content rather than creating or consuming this is definitely a matter of concern. In order to build professional competency there is a need among LIS professionals to leverage the more creation of professional content to stay competent.

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