

THE USAGE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS ON ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NORTH 24 PGS

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ABSTRACT: The social network is one of the best technological inventions in the history of man. The 'blessings' and 'disguise' of social networks had been argued for years, but a solid ultimate conclusion was never surfaced. Relevantly, past studies have claimed that the usage of social networking sites could be one of the factors for the declining English language proficiency among fresh students in the secondary level. Therefore, this research was conducted to further investigate how closely are these variables related to each other, and why are they bonded. The major objectives of this study have been focused on the relationship between English proficiency and usage of social networking sites of the Secondary School Students. Quantitative method is used in this study as the assessments consists numerical analysis and measurements. Data is collected through self-made questionnaires and analyzed by statistical measures. This research is carried out on approximately 120 samples of North 24 Parganas' secondary students covering from both rural and urban areas. The researcher found a significant relationship between social networks and English proficiency. Also certain categorical variables were examined with major variables for further research. From the study it was concluded that the relationship between English proficiency and usage of social networking sites to move forward, research in this field must merge with the mainstream research so that a more minute investigation come into surface.

KEY WORDS: Language Proficiency, Social Network, Social Networking Sites, Social Media

1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction:

English is one of the most widely used languages all over the world. The overwhelming popularity has enabled this language to become a globally recognized international language since decades ago. Long before language was created as a tool for communication, hand signs and body language were served as a medium for communication. Due to its limitations, most of the messages people wanted to express were extremely simple and straightforward. But everything was twisted by the emergence of languages. The primary function of languages is to transfer messages from one to another. English is one of the most widely used languages. The overwhelming popularity has enabled this language to become a globally recognized international language since decades ago. Besides, it is also one of the oldest languages in the world.

However, internet has slowly transformed from something we want, to something we need. Social network is one of the most important elements for Internet, which connects everyone on this planet. This connection has facilitated many things and benefited a lot of people. One of the most widely used social network is face book, consists of more than 1.2 billion active users in 2014. Besides face book, there are many other social networking sites that serve different features and functionality such as Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and many more. But, unexpected things always happen without warning. The usage of social network is beneficial for many things, but is it necessarily good for everything? Some said that the language used in social network is not necessarily correct, and it might affect other users, and domino effects occurred. Several hypotheses can be formed, but the final answer remained uncertain and we are about to find out.

While Boyd and Ellison (2007) stated that the evolution of technology is apparent, and one of the most important evolutions is Internet. Internet has shortened the distance between countries and continents by connecting the people around the world, Baron, (2008), on the other hand, state that Face book, the most popular social networking sites in the world was established in 2004 and served as a bridge to meet new people and stay connected with the people you already knew. Grandzol and Grandzol (2010) had found out that SNSs users can be benefited in terms of English learning where English is the most commonly used language in social networks. Terregrossa, Wang (2010) asserted that social networking usage is negatively associated with academic performance of student users and destructive impact of internet usage is far more momentous than its advantages. Moreno & Kelb (2012) observed that for adolescents social networking sites are an important medium for self-expression, communication with friends and peer feedback. Yousaf & Ahmed (2013) found that spelling errors during formal writings are becoming extremely common these days due to excessive usage of SMS. The usage of improper vocals in SMS has implant new languages into user's sub-conscious mind.

Thus, most of the past studies focused on some of the conspicuous relationships between usage of social networking sites and English language proficiency. Most of them show that there is a relationship between the usage of social networking sites and an individual's English proficiency. However, the findings of previous studies are not stagnant, some showed the positive relationship but some negative. The primary aim of this study is to build a stronger pillar for previous investigation and to find out the exact relationship between social networks and English proficiency.

1.1 Need of the Study:

The current study is deemed important as it provide some insight for us to pay attention on the usage of social networking in English language proficiency. Extensive research has been carried out on the importance of using of social networking for the learning of English as a second language. However, functional studies which pay attention to the impact of using social networking for the learning of English in North 24 Pgs are relatively small. However, the importance of this study is given below:

With the growth of digital Medias such as smart phones and computers, social networks have become part of the human's life. The formations of this norm arise from the duration of practices and peer influence. It is questionable that whether these practices are harmful or beneficial. Thus, this research was aimed to define the relationship between English proficiency and usage of social networking sites.

- Looking at a bigger picture, the impact of social networks towards language proficiency is way beyond schools & universities, it is everywhere. This research was conducted with a hope of raising public awareness and stops the problem before it gets worse.

This research could be used as a small reference for the secondary students to build a right path for better future. Moreover, the result of this research could be useful for teachers to provide effective lessons and guidance to students in developing their language proficiency. For example, teachers can provide lessons in using proper habits in conversation through the social networking sites.

This study will serve as a guide and help the teachers of the school to know the influence the social media has and is still wielding over the academics of students especially on their & English speaking and writing abilities, and also as an eye opener for them to assist in enlightening and creating awareness for the students, enumerating to them the possible negative influences it could have on them if not checked.

The study is of significant to the parents in the sense that they will have an informed knowledge of the possible negative effects of the social media on their children and serve as a watch) dog to help checkmate the unnecessary exposure of their children to the social networking sites, after all the parent is the first teacher of any child.

Lastly, this research can assist future similar researches to replicate the study by involving more independent variables and respondents to generate a more dynamic and meaningful output.

1.1.Statement of the Problem:

From the large number of literature reviews, we can say that internet has slowly transformed from something we want, to something we need. Social network is one of the most important elements for internet, which connects everyone on this planet. This connection has facilitated many things and benefited a lot of people. These lead to the statement of the problem that “**The Usage of Social Networks on English Proficiency of the Secondary School Students**”.

1.2. Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of the present study are as follows:

O1: To study the difference between male & female secondary school students’ English proficiency and usage of social networking sites.

O2: To study the difference between rural and urban secondary school students’ English proficiency and usage of social networking sites.

O3: To examine the relationship between English proficiency and usage of social networking sites of the Secondary School Students.

1.3. Hypotheses of the Study:

To test the hypothesis statistically, we use null hypotheses. The following null hypotheses are framed stated below:

Ho1: There is no significant difference between male & female students with respect to their usage of social networking sites.

Ho2: There is no significant difference between male & female students with respect to their English Proficiency.

Ho3: There is no significant difference between rural and urban students with respect to their usage of social networking sites.

Ho4: There is no significant difference between rural & urban students with respect to their English Proficiency.

Ho5: There is no significant relationship between usage of social networking sites and English proficiency of secondary school students.

1.4. Delimitation of the Study:

- The study was delimited to two major variables, i.e. usage of social networking sites and English Proficiency only.
- The study was also delimited to 120 samples only.
- The data was collected from Govt.- aided schools only.
- The study was also delimited to only a short demographic area- North 24 Parganas only.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Design:

This is a descriptive survey type field study on the associations between the usage of social networking sites and the English proficiency of the secondary students from North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India. Quantitative approaches used in this study as the assessments consists numerical analysis and measurements. Data is collected by self-made questionnaires.

2.2. Population :

The population of this research are among the students of secondary schools of North 24 Parganas, West Bengal,India.

2.3. Sample:

This research is generally done on 120 secondary school Students (Class IX-X) aging from 14 to 16 from different Schools situated in North 24 Pgs, West Bengal, India.

2.4. Sampling Techniques:

In this study, Probability sampling techniques, particularly random sampling is being used in order to collect the data for the high accuracy and guarantee of good estimation on population characteristics. From all the secondary schools in North 24 Parganas, I have selected three secondary schools randomly for this study considering the demographic characteristics of the respondents covering from both rural and urban areas.

2.5. Research Tools:

The data used for this research was collected by using two self-made questionnaires, constructed by Sumana Samanta Naskar, Assistant Prof. of WBUTTEPA and Feroj Ahamed, students of WBUTTEPA. The first questionnaire about usage of social networking sites containing 32 questions and the other questionnaires about English Proficiency has 25 questions respectively.

2.6. Variables:

In this study, two types of variables are incorporated. These are discussing below:

2.6.1. Major Variables:

- Usage of social networking sites
- English Proficiency

2.6.2. Categorical Variables:

- Gender (Male, Female)
- Locale (Rural, Urban)

3. Analysis and interpretation:

In this chapter, the processed data and tests results will be analyzed thoroughly.

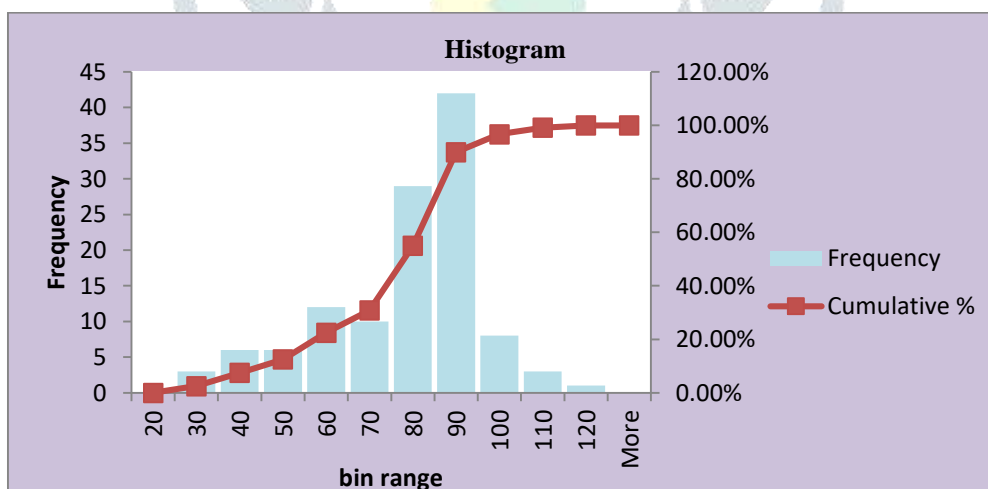


Fig. 1: histogram of collected data for Usage of Social Networking Sites

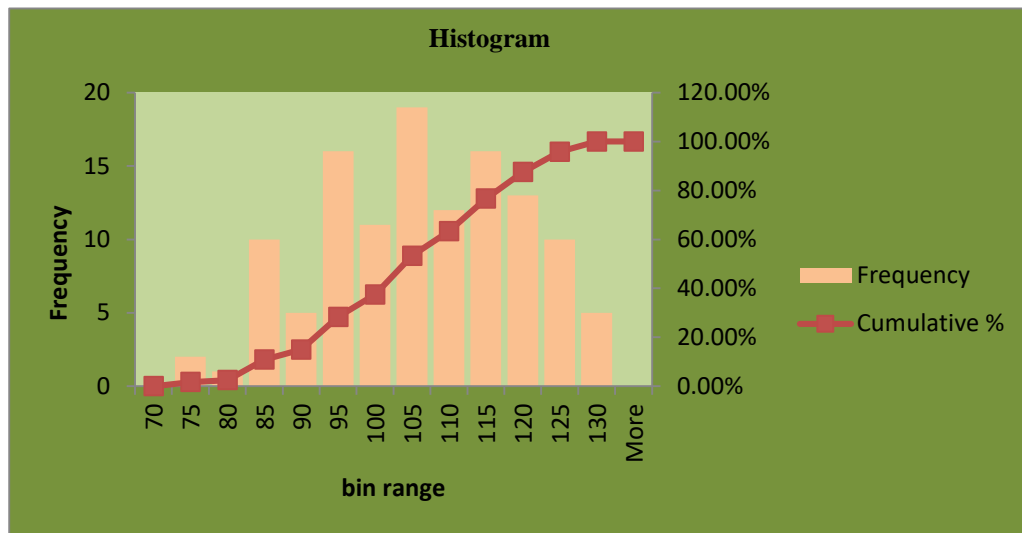


Fig. 2: histogram of collected data for English Proficiency

From Fig.1 and Fig.2 we found, for both English Proficiency and Usage of Social Networking sites is the nature of the Histogram is like Normal Probability Curve (NPC). So we can use inferential statistics like Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test, correlation (Pearson) here for further analysis.

Table 1: calculation of descriptive statistics and t-test of usage of social networking sites with respect to gender:

Variables	N	Mean (M)	S.D.	'P' Value	Remarks	Hypothesis
Female Students	70	69.67	19.84	0.0022	't' test Significant at 0.05 significance level	Ho1 Rejected
Male Students	50	79.76	13.27			

From, Table 1, it reveals that p-value=0.002215 ($p < 0.05$) of usage of social networking sites between female and male secondary school students is less than 0.05. It means that there exists a significance difference between the usage of social networking sites of male and female secondary school students. Thus, **Ho1** is rejected.

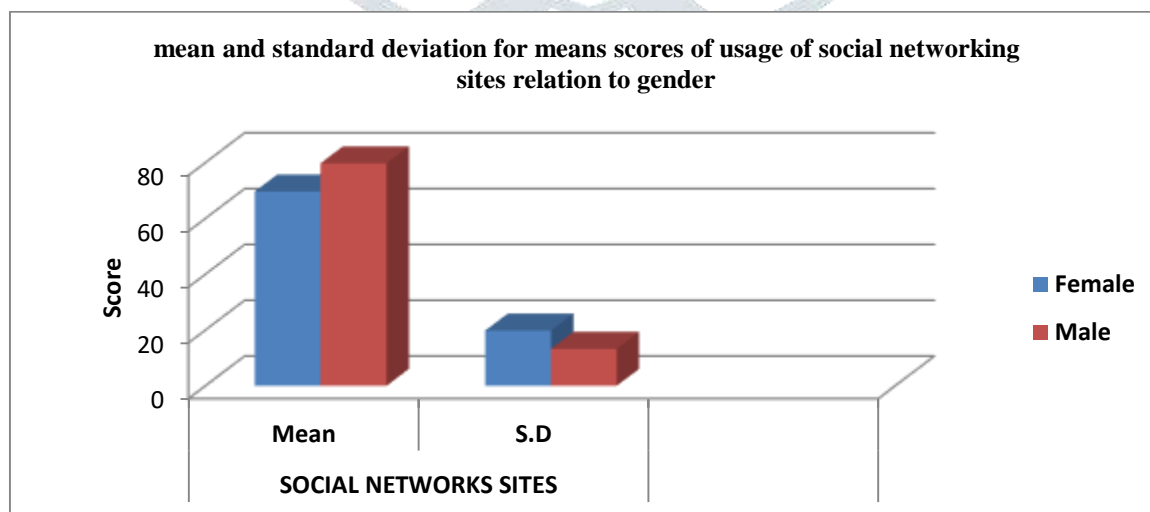


Fig. 3: bar diagram for mean and standard deviation for means scores of usage of social networking sites relation to gender

From **Table 1 and Fig.3** we observe that the mean score of usage of social networking sites of male secondary school students (79.76) is greater than the mean score of usage of social networking sites of female students (69.67). It may, therefore, be concluded that male secondary school students have use more social networking sites in comparison to female students.

Table 2: calculation of descriptive statistics and t-test of english language proficiency with respect to gender:

Variables	N	Mean (M)	S.D.	'P' Value	Remarks	Hypothesis
Female Students	70	99.51	12.4	7.29X10 ⁻⁰⁷ ~0 or very negligible value	't' test Significant at 0.05 significance level	Ho2 Rejected
Male Students	50	111.2	12.6			

From, **Table 2**, it reveals that p-value= ~0 or very negligible value ($p < 0.05$) of English language proficiency between female and male secondary school students is less than 0.05. It means that there is a significant difference in English Proficiency between male & female students at 0.05 levels of significance. Thus, **Ho2** is rejected.

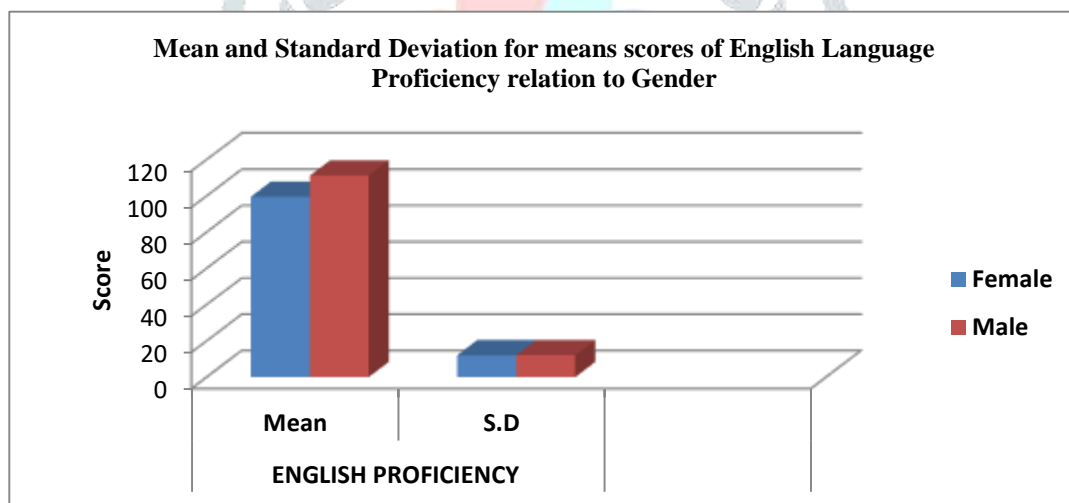


Fig. 4: bar diagram for mean and standard deviation for means scores of English language proficiency relation to gender

From **Table 2 and Fig.4** we observe that the mean score of English language proficiency of male secondary school students (111.2) is greater than the mean score of English language proficiency of female students (99.51). It may, therefore, be concluded that male secondary school students have more English language proficiency in comparison to female students.

Table 3: calculation of descriptive statistics and t-test of usage of social networking sites with respect to locale:

Variables	N	Mean (M)	S.D	'P' Value	Remarks	Hypothesis
Rural	53	66.32	20.9	2.6X10 ⁻⁵	't' test Significant at 0.05 significance level	Ho3 Rejected

Urban	67	79.85	13.56	=0.00003		
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From, **Table 3**, it reveals that p-value=0.00003 ($p < 0.05$) of usage of social networking sites between rural and urban secondary school students is less than 0.05. It means that there is a significant difference between rural & urban students' usage of social networking sites at 0.05 levels of significance. Thus, **Ho3** is rejected.

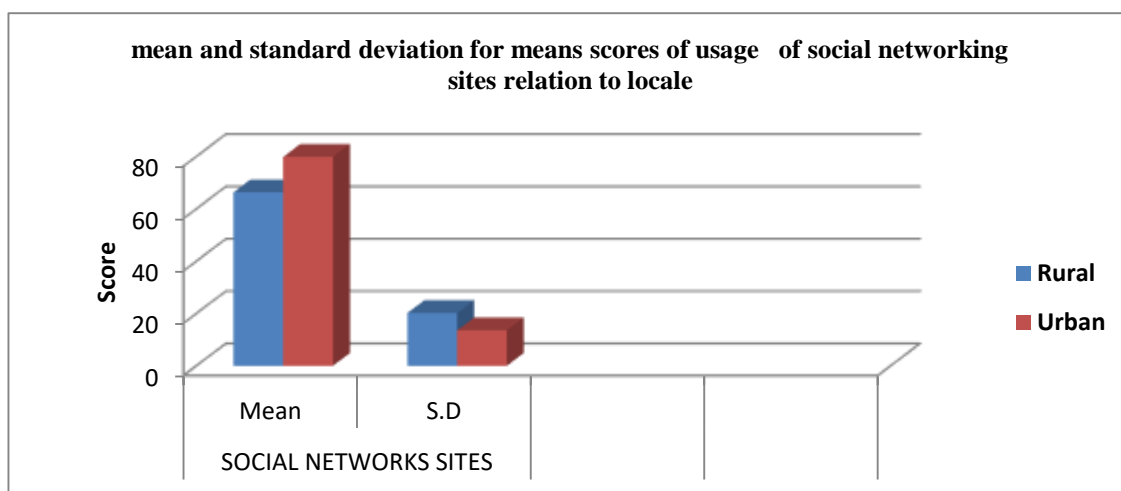


Fig. 5: bar diagram for mean and standard deviation for means scores of usage of social networking sites relation to locale.

From **Table 3 and Fig.5** we observe that the mean score of usage of social networking sites of rural secondary school students (66.32) is less than the mean score of usage of social networking sites of urban students (79.85). It may, therefore, be concluded that urban secondary school students have use more social networking sites in comparison to rural students.

Table 4: calculation of descriptive statistics and t-test of english language proficiency with respect to locale:

Variables	N	Mean (M)	S.D	'P' Value	Remarks	Hypothesis
Rural	53	94.35	8.34	4.47X10 ⁻¹⁷ ~0 i.e. or very negligible value	't' test Significant at 0.05 significance level	Ho4 Rejected
Urban	67	112.31	10.99			

From, **Table 4**, it reveals that p-value= ~0 or very negligible value ($p < 0.05$) of English language proficiency between rural and urban secondary school students is less than 0.05. It means that there is a significant difference between rural & urban students' usage of social networking sites at 0.05 levels of significance. Thus, **Ho4** is rejected.

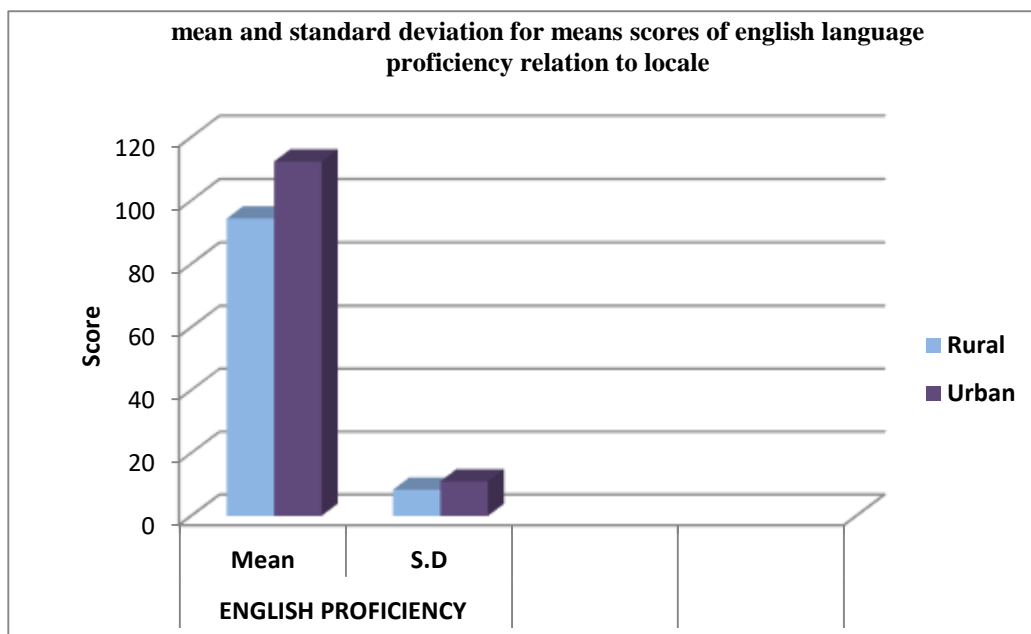


Fig. 6: bar diagram for mean and standard deviation for means scores of English language proficiency relation to locale.

From **Table 4** and **Fig.6** we observe that the mean score of English language proficiency of rural secondary school students (94.35) is less than the mean score of urban students (112.31). It may, therefore, be concluded that urban secondary school students have more English language proficiency in comparison to rural students.

Table 5: correlation between English language proficiency and usage of social networking sites:

Variables	'r' calculated	'r' critical	Result	Remarks	Hypothesis
Usage of Social Networking Sites	0.69	0.18	$r_{cal} > r_{cri}$	't' test Significant at 0.05 significance level	Ho5 Rejected
English Proficiency					

From, **Table 5**, it reveals that 'r' calculated value (0.69) is greater than 'r' critical Value (0.18). It means that there exists a significant relationship between usage of social networking sites and English proficiency of secondary school student. Thus, **Ho5** is rejected.

Discussions:

By the analysis of the data, it helped to evolve the vital findings of the research. The main findings of the study can be summarized as follows:

In this study we found that the mean score of usage of social networking sites of female secondary school students (69.67) is less than the male secondary school students (79.76) and the p-value ($P < 0.002215$) is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Mainly availability of technological devices, freedom and social phenomenon etc. are the reasons for more usage of social networking sites to male students than female students. So, the hypothesis (**Ho1**) "There is no significant difference between male & female students with respect to their usage of social networking sites" is rejected.

From the data analysis we saw that the mean score English Proficiency of female secondary school students (99.51) is less than the male secondary school students (111.2) and the p-value ($P < 0$ or very negligible value) is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Mainly the continuous visit of social networking sites, watching English movies, English Songs, reading English newspapers, magazines are the reasons for more English Proficiency to male students than female students. So the projected hypothesis (**Ho2**) “There is no significant difference between male & female students with respect to their English Proficiency” is rejected.

After the data analysis we observed that the mean score of usage of social networking sites of urban secondary school students (79.85) is greater than the rural secondary school students (66.32) and the p-value ($P < 0.00003$) is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Mainly availability 4g & Wi-Fi networks, social freedom, accessibility of updated smart phones in urban areas, the more sophisticated life style of urban students, their well up status etc. are the reasons for more usage of social networking sites to the students living in the urban areas than the rural students who are living in the village or Panchayet areas. So, the hypothesis (**Ho3**) “There is no significant difference between rural and urban students with respect to their usage of social networking sites” is rejected.

From this study we found that the mean score English Proficiency of rural secondary school students (94.35) is less than the urban secondary school students (112.31) and the p-value ($P < 0$ or very negligible value) is less than the 0.05 level of significance. It is because of the fact that rural secondary school students are not well aware of the English movies, newspaper and other technological tools and its mastery. Moreover, rural pupil has a certain fear of English subject. They dare to speak in English properly. So the earlier said hypothesis (**Ho4**) “There is no significant difference between rural & urban students with respect to their English Proficiency” is rejected.

From the analysis, it reveals that ‘r’ calculated value (0.69) is greater than ‘r’ critical Value (0.18). So, the hypothesis (**Ho5**) “There is no significant relationship between usage of social networking sites and English proficiency of secondary school students” is rejected. It means that there exists a significant relationship between usage of social networking sites and English proficiency of secondary school student.

4.2 Conclusions:

Thus, from the results of the study it is quite clear that there are differences to some extent of usage of social networking sites and English Proficiency of secondary school students as a whole with respect to their gender as well as locale. But, it is also clear that there exists a significant relationship between usage of social networking sites and English proficiency of secondary school student. Moreover, from the study it was concluded that the relationship between English proficiency and usage of social networking sites to move forward, research in this field must merge with the mainstream research so that a more minute investigation come into surface.

4.3 Further Suggestions or Recommendations:

However, relying on the analysis and the subsequent results as mentioned earlier, various recommendations could be drawn out as navigation for improvement in future studies. In order to ensure the precision of the results more minutely, the targeted population could be expanded. For instance, the researcher can target more than just accounting students. Involving different pupils from different disciplines or courses in the research will result to a more balanced demographic data, and give a more reliable output. Besides that, the sample size can be increased to more than 250, mainly to offset the unexpected problems such as the amount of unusable questionnaires that lead to an overly small size of usable sample.

Along with these, financial resource is vital as well. With a stronger financial foundation, the research can be carried out at a larger region or demographic area, instead of some secondary schools from a small district of West Bengal. On the other hand, the method of data collection for this research is one of the key factors that should be concerned. In this study, the method of data collection was distribution of

questionnaires to a group of targeted students and collects them back after the questionnaires had been filled up. However, this could bring various problems to the research such as questionnaires are not answered properly which will lead to unusable data and degrade the quality of the result. As a solution, face-to-face interview can be useful. With interview, the data obtained will be more accurate and respondents' English proficiency can be observed during the interview session. Last but not least, from the ultimate findings of this study, various recommendations could be drawn to the society regarding the usage of social networking sites on an individual's English proficiency. The usage of social networks on English proficiency of the secondary school students is subject to their habits and preference.

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