

## Use of Social Media Platforms by University Students

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### Abstract

*The main objective of this study was to identify purposes of using different social media platforms by university students studying in different faculties, i.e., management, arts and humanities, and education. A descriptive research design was employed under quantitative inquiry. A Google Form questionnaire was administered, and responses were collected purposefully from students studying at Madhyabindu Multiple Campus and Kumarwanti Multiple Campus. Out of 350 responses, only 311 complete responses were further processed and analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, and chart. This study reveals that Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram social media platforms are used by the majority of students for two or more hours each day, aiming to connect other people and share personal experience through photos, videos, and texts rather than academic and professional purposes. However, findings were drawn based on the responses of only 311 sample students, which may restrict the generalization of the findings of this study to the whole population. This paper contributes to the prevailing body of knowledge on the use of social media platforms by university students. Accordingly, this will be helpful for educational institutions, policymakers and social media platforms to make different provisions and offers regarding the social media sites.*

**Keywords:** *Social media, Students, Cybercrimes, Facebook, Uses and Gratifications Theory*

### Introduction

The advancement of the internet has contributed to the exchange of news, knowledge, ideas, and opinions among the people alive in the different parts of the world within a second. Thus, the world has become a small village, eradicating the obligations of distance, time, and borders

while communicating with each other.

The trend of using new communication technology has increased in many sectors, including the education sector (García-Martínez et al., 2023). Social media is a virtual community by which messages, ideas, news, and information are generated, shared and utilized by

divergent groups of people having different characteristics (Baglione et al., 2017). So, it is more preferable than other traditional forms of media (Sumadevi, 2023). Social media is also known as blogs, social networking site, virtual social world, media platforms, social communication, virtual communities, web based social network and mass communication channel (Boyd, 2008; Chicharo et al., 2014; Joinson, 2008; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). According to Kapoor et al. (2017), social media is a digital space developed for maintaining interactions and social networking at different levels, i.e., personal, business, professional, political, societal, and marketing. So, social media is an internet-based application or platform that virtually connects people together. It enables users to create, edit, and share contents related to personal communication, socialization, business, politics, current affairs, and education via image, message, text, audio, or video with other people belonging to the social network. Initially, social media named classmates.com was introduced by Randy Conrads in order to maintain regular connections among fellow students studying in the same school or university and later on lost touch. In 1997, SixDegrees.com was launched. It focused

on direct links between users. Features like personal profiles and messaging a group of friends appeared. Different institutions could be able to tie up with their clients easily because many people have their own accounts and easy excess on many social media such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and so on (Tess, 2013). Political parties and their candidates actively use Facebook and Twitter while interacting with people, announcing policies or agendas, sharing updates, and mobilizing supporters (Stier et al., 2020). Similarly, it is a powerful mechanism for promoting social awareness to bring significant change in society and energizing youth people to become social activists. People often spend several times a day on social media to update their own status, comment on another's post or status, and make chats with others. Business organizations use social media to disseminate in-depth information about their products or services (Smits & Mogos, 2013). Nowadays, almost all business organizations are using social media platforms to disseminate valuable information to their clients, gather up-to-date information, make online transactions, settle complaints, and undertake promotional campaigns. Similarly, Al-Yafi et al. (2018) argue that normal user students

have higher academic performance than their low-user and addicted peers. Unfortunately, social media has become a platform for disseminating misinformation by broadcasting fabricated stories, propaganda stories, factoid stories, hyper partisan news, rumors, and provocative news by different people or groups (Zannettou et al., 2018). So, different people and organizations are losing their public image, property, and confidence. Similarly, Noori et al. (2023) opined that youth are suffering from depression, loneliness, cyberbullying, sexual harassment, and many other problems due to excessive use of social media. Thus, extreme usage of social media may lead to social media addiction that generates undesirable consequences such as personal and family problems, distraction, lack of productivity, and social disorder. Facebook changed its name to Meta Platforms Incorporation in October 21, declaring a new era of social interaction (Kraus et al., 2022). Currently this company owns and operates many popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, Threads, WhatsApp, and much more, aiming to create a virtual world where people can easily connect, discover communities, and flourish in their businesses through the power of social technology (Kraus et al., 2022). TikTok is a social media network on a video platform introduced by Zhang Yiming in 2016 (Pratiwi et al., 2021). It is widely used to create, share, and discover short forms of video content. Additionally, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Twitter now X are also popular social media platforms having multi-functional attributes. The latest statistics show that Facebook is the dominant social media platform, with 3.7 billion active users throughout the world. YouTube stood in the second position with 2.53 billion active users and Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, WeChat, Telegram, Facebook Messenger, Snapchat, and Douyin as the most popular social media platforms in 2024 (Accentuate.2024) . Thus, the popularity and usage rate of social media is growing throughout the world day by day, and social networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, TikTok, etc. are becoming universal networking sites. Generation Z (Gen Z) belongs to people who were born after 1995 and early 2010 (Chatzoglou et al., 2020). This generation is also called the internet generation or digital natives, as they grew up on the internet and are always connected with others using social media platforms

like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, and so on (Lanier, 2017; Turner, 2015). Students enrolled in educational institutions at various levels ranging from primary to secondary and higher education (universities) participate in educational activities to understand concepts, develop skills and knowledge, enhance academic degree and develop personalities. Students enrolled in university belonged to Generation Z and are using information and communication technology in their everyday lives to undertake academic and other activities (D'Ambra et al., 2012). Connectivity of social media with education sector has been assumed to be easy as almost college students are the regular and active users of different social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube and so on (Alshuaibi et al., 2018; Bhat & Gupta, 2019). So, universities and other educational institutions are progressively integrating social media into their academic systems as a platform for sharing notices, assignments, knowledge, and ideas between instructors and students. Students open their personal profile and page in social media for making discussion, sharing information, undertaking virtual classes, doing group assignments, getting updates about current news, improving communication skills, building professional identity, searching job opportunities, promoting their own creativity, making entertainment, getting support, and so on (Hussain, 2012; Keum et al., 2023; Mastrodicasa & Metellus, 2013; Mese & Aydin, 2019; Sivakumar et al., 2023). Kolhar et al. (2021) had undertaken cross-sectional research in Saudi Arabia. The main objective of this research was to identify the effect of social media use on learning, social interaction, and sleep duration. This study found that the majority of students used social media for non-academic purposes, i.e., to pass time and make chats with others till mid night. Ansari and Khan (2020) opined that social media is a platform for collaborative learning via online interaction with teachers and peers. Students heavily involved in collaborative learning through social media would be able to become more creative, dynamic, and research-oriented. Thus, there is a positive association between students engagement in social media and their academic performance. However, Barton et al. (2018) argue that students skills or capabilities for regulating time and study environment, paying proper attention towards study, and being motivated and behaviorally active in their own learning

process are self-regulating learning strategies or tools that assist to enhance academic success rather than use of social media for effective academic performance. In the Indian context, many scholars such as (Alvi, 2021; Bhat & Gupta, 2019; Bordoloi et al., 2021; Chatterjee et al., 2020; Dahdal, 2020; Guess et al., 2020; Malak et al., 2022; Saqib & Amin, 2024; Sobaih et al., 2022) had undertaken research on the use of social media by college students and propounded controverse findings about the use of social media and their impacts on college students behavioral patterns. Thus, studies on the use of social media in the academic sector are flourishing research areas throughout the world, including Nepal.

In the Nepalese context, based on the available data in (Datareportal, 2024), the number of social media users has increased significantly from approximately 2.5 million in 2014 to 13.50 million in 2024, reflecting a growth rate of over 440% in ten years. By early 2024, social media users constituted about 43.5% of the total population, indicating that nearly half of the population engages with social media platforms. It means the usage trend and rate of social media are rising geometrically in Nepal. Tribhuvan University enacted

Information Technology Policy 2023 to integrate and use modern communication tools, including social media, for academic and administrative purposes. So university students can use social media for academic purposes. For eradicating cybercrimes and maintaining cyber security, Nepal has enacted, implemented, and upgraded many cyber laws and acts, such as the Electronic Transactions Act, 2008; Children's Act, 1992; Copyright Act, 2002; National Cyber Security Policy, 2016; Individual Privacy Act, 2018; Directives for Managing the Use of Social Networks, 2023; and enlisting many provisions, procedures, authorities, duties, and responsibilities of all stakeholders (Shrestha, 2023). Additionally, the Cyber Bureau was established on May 10, 2018 as a distinct unit within the Nepal Police to regulate and overcome cyber issues or crimes. However, cybercrimes such as cyberbullying, piracy, phishing, stalking, investment scams, fake events, etc. are happening day by day. Using screen sharing apps and unverified mobile apps, different frauds, such as impersonation fraud, parcel fraud, online romance fraud, online business/trading platform fraud, lottery fraud, phishing fraud, etc., are being undertaken in Nepal by many fraudsters. Around 70% of the

individuals who belonged to the age group 19-30 became victims of the cyber-enabled frauds till May 31 (Nepal Rastra Bank [NRB], 2024). Jha et al. (2016) undertaken a study on Facebook use and its effect on social interaction, behavior, and health of medical science students. This study found a negative impact of Facebook use on the health and behavioral patterns of medical students. Similarly, Karki et al. (2020) had undertaken research on smart phone addiction among newly admitted undergraduate medical students, and male students were found to be more smart phone addicted than female students. The majority of male students used smartphones for gaming and communication purposes rather than study purposes. In the same vein, Bhandari et al. (2017) examined associations among internet addiction, sleep quality, and depression symptoms of undergraduate students of Kathmandu and Chitwan districts. This study found a positive association between sleep quality and depression due to internet addiction among undergraduate students. These studies indicate that the majority of research papers were related to the medical sector students usage pattern of social media in Nepal. So, this study aims to fulfill this gap by undertaking research on the use of social

media by university students, especially those who belonged to the management, arts, and education faculties of Tribhuvan University. Major objectives of this study were to know about the types of social media used by students, to identify major purposes for using social media, to identify victims of cybercrimes, and to identify major problems encountered by students while using social media. Many theories, such as Theory of Planned Behavior, Theory of Reason Action, Theory of Innovation Diffusion, Uses and Gratifications Theory, Cognitive Dissonance Theory, and so on, were advanced by different scholars and are still widely used by many researchers while undertaking studies about new product innovation and its diffusion. This study was based on uses and gratifications theory, as it provides a solid lens to identify the main purposes of using social media by university students. The main objective of the uses and gratifications theory is to explore the different types of needs and purposes that stimulate people to use different media (Ko et al., 2005). In accordance with this theory, people consciously choose and use media to fulfill different needs, such as seeking information and knowledge, entertainment, social interaction, building self-esteem,

connecting with others, maintaining social relationships, and minimizing stress and anxiety.

Hew (2011) had undertaken a study on use of Facebook by students and teachers. Findings from this study confirmed that students and teachers use Facebook for different purposes such as relationship management with known people, sending messages to a friend, meeting new people, doing entertainment, making themselves more popular, playing games and using other applications, learning new knowledge, and undertaking awareness campaigns. Similarly, Lai et al. (2023) argue that active social media users are able to reduce social anxiety by maintaining proper communication with others and posting their own status and experience on social media.

### **Methodology**

Siedlecki (2020) suggests that a descriptive research design is preferable while studying about any variable of interest only and explaining its salient features or characteristics without testing of hypothesis. This study aimed to identify purposes of social media usage, time spent on social media platforms every day, frequency of use per day, and problems encountered

by university students while using social media sites. The population included students in different years and semesters at Madhyabindu Multiple Campus, and Kumarwari Multiple Campus. The chosen institutions were affiliated with Tribhuvan University and offered various streams in the same geographic area. The reason for selecting these educational institutions was that both institutions were affiliated with Tribhuvan University, around 80% students study in TU and offer many streams in the same geographic area. This study was undertaken following a descriptive research design under a quantitative approach.

A questionnaire was developed incorporating different sources (Bhat & Gupta, 2019; Chicharo et al., 2014; Fasaie & Adegbilero-Iwari, 2016; Sumadevi, 2023). The contents of the questionnaire were reviewed by two faculty colleagues who had an idea about information and communication technology and social media platforms. Later on, the questionnaire was modified, incorporating their valuable suggestions, and a pilot study was undertaken on 15 university students to estimate the time required to fill out the questionnaire. The questionnaire contains 11 questions related to respondents age, gender, program of study, types of

social media used, device used to access social media, average daily duration and frequency of social media use, purposes for using social media, types of victims encountered, and problems faced using social media.

A Google form questionnaire was used to gather responses from students in various faculties, using a purposive sampling technique. The researcher collaborated

with concerned department heads at Kumarwanti Multiple Campus and Madhyabindu Multiple Campus to inform students about the research objective and upload the questionnaire via WhatsApp and Messenger groups. 350 responses were collected, with 311 complete responses processed. Statistical tools like chart, frequency, and percentage were used for data analysis.

## Results

This study collected demographic profile of respondents in terms of their gender and age. Gender was classified as male and female and age was categorized in to three groups i.e. 18-22, 23-27 and 28& above. The following table depicts respondents demographic profile and program of study.

**Table 1**

*Demographic and Program of Study Profile*

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	110	35.40
	Female	201	64.60
Age Group	18-22	213	68.50
	23-27	80	25.70
	28 and above	18	5.80
Program	BBS	114	45.50
	BBA	55	17.70
	BICTE	41	45.40
	BA-BSW	23	7.30
	B. Ed	38	9.10
	MBS	23	7.30



## 78 The Journal of Madhyabindu Multiple Campus, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2025

Table 1 shows that female respondents were (n = 201, 64.60%) and male respondents (n = 110, 35.40%). In terms of age, the majority of respondents, i.e. 68.50% were in the 18–22 year group. Finally, out of 311 respondents, 141 (45.40%) studied BBS, 55 (17.70%) studied BBA, 41 (13.20%) studied BICTE, 28 (9.10%) studied B.Ed., and 23 (7.30%) studied BA-BSW and MBS, respectively.

**Table 2**

### *Average Daily Frequency and Duration of Social Media Use*

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Daily Frequency	1-3 times a day	128	41.20
	4–6 times a day	116	37.20
	More than 6 times a day	67	21.50
Daily Duration	Do not access daily	15	4.80
	Less than 30 minutes	17	5.50
	Around 1 hour	65	21.00
	Around 2 hour	94	30.10
	More than 2 hours	120	38.60

### *Online Survey, 2024*

Table 2 depicts the daily frequency and duration of time spent on different social media by university students. As shown in the table, 128 (41.20%) students use social media 1-3 times a day, 116 (37.30%) students use it 4-6 times a day, and only 67 (21.50%) students use social media more than 6 times a day. Similarly, as presented in Table 2, it was found that the majority of university students spent more than 2 hours on social media each day (n = 120, 38.60%), around 2 hours each day (n = 94, 30.10%), around 1 hour each day (n = 65, 21.00%), less than 30 minutes each day (n = 17, 5.50%), and only 15 (4.80%) respondents argue that they do not access social media daily.

**Table 3**

### *Types of Social Media Used*

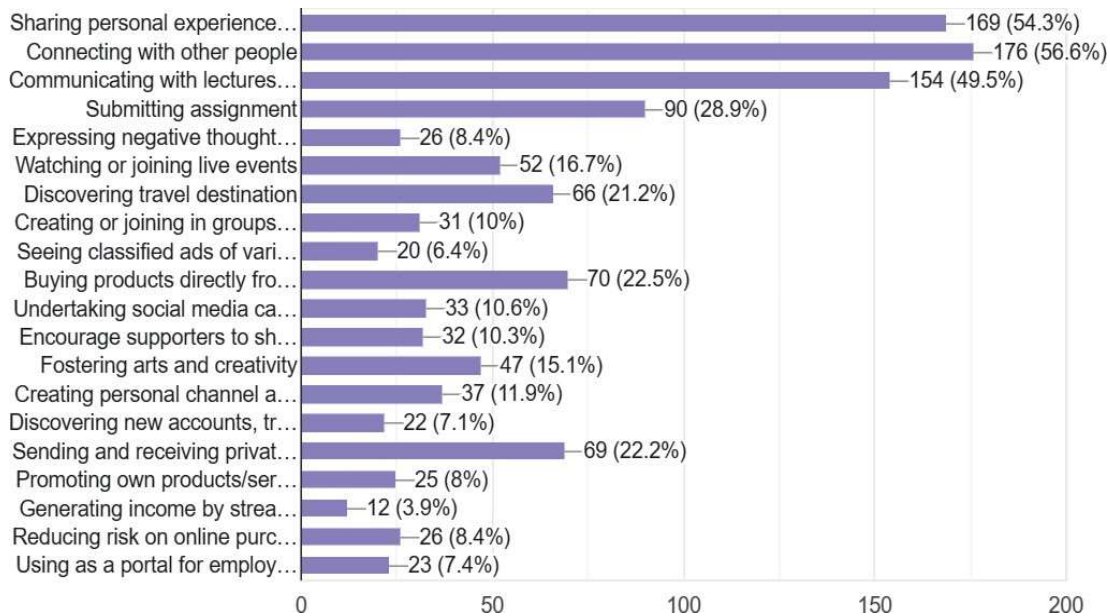
Description	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	251	80.70
YouTube	225	72.30
Twitter (now X)	37	11.90
Instagram	195	62.70

TikTok	167	53.70
LinkedIn	34	10.90
Snapchat	114	36.70
WhatsApp	209	67.20

Online Survey, 2024

Figure 1:

Purpose of Social Media Use



As mentioned in Table 3, it was found that Facebook is the universal social media platform, and it was used by nearly two-thirds of respondents (80.70%), followed by YouTube (72.30%), WhatsApp (67.20%), Instagram (62.70%), TikTok (53.70%), Snapchat (36.70%), Twitter (11.90%), and LinkedIn (10.90%). It was also revealed that most of the respondents (n = 272, 87.50%) used smartphones and laptops (n = 137, 44.10%) to access social media platforms. However, tablets were

used by only 25 (8%) respondents while using social media.

In order to identify the main purpose of university students to use social media, altogether 20 purposes of social media use were enlisted on the questionnaire. Figure 1 depicts this information along with the frequency and respective percentage of respondents who prefer to use social media for various purposes. As shown in figure 1, a total of 176 (56.60%) respondents used

**80 The Journal of Madhyabindu Multiple Campus, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2025**

social media platforms for connecting with other people. Similarly, 169 (54.3%) respondents used social media to share their own personal experience through photos, videos, and texts. Additionally, it was also found that 154 (49.50%) university students preferred to use social media platforms for communication with their lecturers, professors, and peers for academic purposes. But the majority of students were not interested to attain academic benefits using social media platforms. Furthermore, it was found that 70 (22.50%) respondents used social media platforms of different organizations to buy different products followed by watching or joining live events (16.70%), fostering

arts and creativity (15.10%), creating personal channel and uploading video (11.90%), understanding social media campaign for public awareness (10.60%), encouraging supporters to share their experience or content (10.30%), creating or joining in a group (10.00%), reducing risk on online purchase reviewing social media comments, expressing negative thoughts and feelings (8.40%), promoting own products/services and commercial activities (8.00%), using as a portal for employment seeking (7.40%), discovering new accounts, trends and popular post (7.10%), seeing classified ads (6.40%), and generating income streaming live (3.90%).

**Figure 2:**

*Extent of Being victims of Cybercrime*

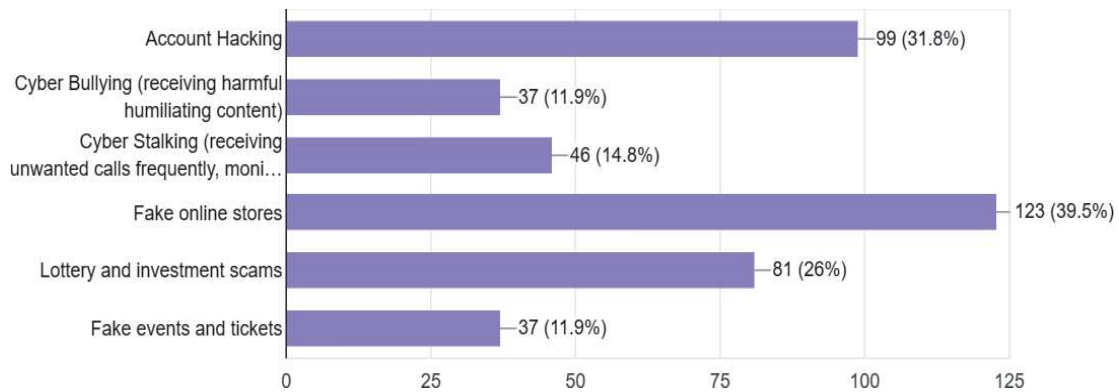


Figure 2 shows information about the extent of being a victim of cybercrimes in terms of account hacking, cyberbullying, cyber stalking, fake online stores, lottery

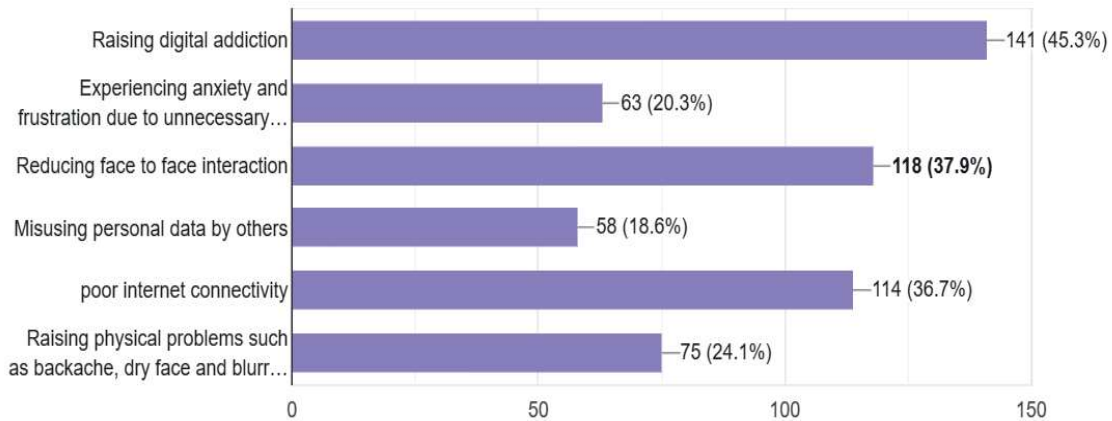
and investment scams, and fake events and tickets. Out of 311 respondents, 123 (39.50%) respondents noted that they became victims of different fake online

stores. Similarly, 99 (31.80%) respondents were victims of account hacking. Likewise, 81 (26.00%) respondents become victims of lottery and investment scams. Furthermore, cyberbullying and fake events

46 (14.87%) respondents suffered from cyberstalking, and 37 (11.9%) respondents noted that they became victims of

**Figure 3**

*Problems Encountered While Using Social Media*



As mentioned in Figure 3, problems encountered by the respondents while using social media were measured, enlisting six problems. Out of which, raising digital addiction was the greatest problem (45.3%), followed by reducing face-to-face interaction (37.9%), poor internet connectivity (36.7%), raising physical problems such as backache, dry face, and blurred vision (24.1%), experiencing anxiety and frustration due to unnecessary comparison with others (20.3%), and misusing personal data by others (18.6%).

**Discussion**

The study reveals that university students use social media for various purposes, with female students predominantly studying higher education. Because of the entire population composition of our country, fostering of a gender equity campaign, growth of the service sector industry, reservation quota system in government jobs, and increasing trend of abroad study as well as foreign employment of male students may lead to a high level of gender variation in university-level education. Nearly two-thirds of students spend two or more hours daily on platforms like

Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram. These platforms are used for connecting, sharing personal experiences, and creating virtual forums. However, some students may not use social media for academic purposes due to the perceived casual nature of space. Additionally, cybercrime poses a high risk to university students, potentially leading to physical and mental health issues. It was found that nearly two-thirds of students spent two or more than two hours each day on social media. However, this finding is not consistent with many previous studies (Jha et al., 2016; Pokhrel, 2021; Saha & Guha, 2019). It could be due to heterogeneity in sample size, nature of the program of the study, availability of time, and so on.

The finding confirms that almost all respondents used smartphones to get access to social media. This result is in line with the previous studies (Ataş & Çelik, 2019; Fook et al., 2021; Gamage & Perera, 2021; Karki et al., 2020). The popularity of a smartphone may be attributed to its multiple features, such as a strong processor, large RAM and storage capacity, a long-lasting battery with fast charging, a high-resolution screen, an optimized camera system, a distinct image in front of friends, and multiple functionality. Conversely,

other devices, such as a laptop, tablet, and smartwatch, may have limited features and many drawbacks or limitations.

The results show that Facebook is the most popular and widely applicable social media platform, and YouTube is the second most popular social media. This finding is consistent with the finding of a previous study undertaken by (Accentuate,2024). Facebook always gives priority to innovation, highly concerns the privacy rights of its users, removes spam and fraudulent accounts every year, and offers many services. That is why it may become the largest social media platform throughout the world. As a video sharing platform, YouTube offers diverse video content related to entertainment, tutorials, games, news, and so on. Similarly, WhatsApp facilitates sharing academic documents, messaging, and voice and video calls, and Instagram is widely used for visual content and social interaction. LinkedIn is the largest online professional platform, having multiple purposes (Bardeen,2024). However, it was found that a very nominal number of students used this platform. Due to the lack of awareness about the usefulness of LinkedIn, the majority of university students may not use this platform widely. The result reveals

that the majority of students used social media platforms for connecting with other people and sharing personal experience through photos, videos, and texts. Different scholars (Astleitner & Schlick, 2024; Kolhar et al., 2021; Mohd Jaffari et al., 2024; Pan et al., 2019) have concluded that the majority of university students use social media sites for connecting with other people, aiming to maintain social relationships, exploring personal identity, sharing personal experience via photos, videos, and text messages, and making social comparisons. Thus, this finding is consistent with the findings of other scholars. It means the majority of students are curious and interested in maintaining regular interaction, sharing their own feelings and experiences via audiovisual contents, and developing sound and bonding interpersonal relationships with others via social media platforms. Facebook and WhatsApp enable students and teachers to create a virtual forum, like or share articles, videos, and other academic documents, connect or host live, and so on (Awidi et al., 2019; Greenhow & Galvin, 2020; Zarzour et al., 2020). WhatsApp, Zoom, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc. are widely used social media platforms in the academic sector for group discussion, virtual lecturers, sharing resources, and posting lecturers. So, students and teachers are able to do collaborative learning using different social media platforms. However, Dzogbenuku and Kumi (2018) found that students often use social media for entertainment and social activities rather than discussion with others about academic purposes. Accordingly, this study found that many students were not using social media platforms for academic purposes. The majority of students may feel social media platforms as a casual space rather than a formal avenue for academic discourse and use accordingly rather than academic purpose. Beyond these purposes for using social media, a very nominal portion of students expressed their view in favor of other purposes such as expressing negative thoughts and feelings, watching or joining live events, discovering travel destinations, creating personal channels, uploading videos, and using it as a portal for employment seeking. Thus, after assessing the responses of students, researcher argue that the majority of university students living in Kawasoti area and studying at Madhyabindu Multiple Campus and Kumarwanti Multiple Campus are missing many opportunities, such as visiting different tourist destinations,

fostering their own creativity by making personal channels, associating with or belonging to different professional forums, and searching about investment and job opportunities in renowned corporate houses and governmental organizations.

University students may have a high risk of suffering from different types of cybercrime as they use information and communication technology to a large extent. As found in research undertaken by Tolulope (2022) students engaged in online banking and involved in online chatting with strangers were victims of cybercrimes. A number of international studies found contradictory results on cybercrime. In United States, a survey (Zalaquett & Chatters, 2014) of 604 students found that 19% had experienced cyberbullying. However, in Bangladesh, 57% of students were victims of cyberbullying and cyberstalking (Sheikh et al., 2023). Same like, Chan and Sheridan (2021) found that out of 638 undergraduate students, around 54% became victims of cybercrimes in Spain. In India, Kaur and Saini (2023) found that students were bullied from their friends, relatives, peer group, senior, junior and unknowns. Different scholars (Acquadro Maran & Begotti, 2019; Chan & Sheridan, 2021; Durak & Saritepeci, 2020; Kraft & Wang,

2010) have opined that students suffering from cybercrimes such as cyberbullying, cyberstalking, and fake online stores often have problematic physical and mental health conditions such as weight loss, sleep problems, anger, fear, anxiety, depression, distress, humiliation, etc. Participants in this study also argue that they were victims of different types of cybercrimes and frauds, such as fake online stores, account hacking, cyberstalking, cyberbullying, lottery and investment scams, and fake events and scams. However, the researcher did not extract its impact on their psychological wellbeing and academic performance. Thus, further research is needed to understand the impact of cybercrimes on mental health and academic performance of students. Researcher found that many problems, such as digital addiction, reducing face-to-face interaction, backache, dry face, blurred vision, etc., were encountered by many students while using social media. The prevalence of digital addiction creates many problems in the life of students, so educational institutions should organize campaigns and awareness programs enlightening students about the consequences of digital addiction on their physical and mental wellbeing.

This study was undertaken considering the

time and frequency of using social media platforms for various purposes by the university students studying in different faculties in a day. Further studies would be able to undertake a comparison about the usage pattern of social media platforms by the students studying in the semester system and the annual system. This study was descriptive in nature and intended to identify different dimensions related to the use of social media by university students. However, a questionnaire was developed considering assumptions of uses and gratification theory and other relevant literatures so the findings of this study will provide valuable insights to policymakers, academicians, students, and educational institutions. Similarly, respondents were students studying in semester-based and annual-based streams at two Tribhuvan University-affiliated campuses situated in Kawasoti, Nawalparasi. So, the findings of this study may not be generalized to the entire population of students studying in different universities in Nepal. Further research could examine the effect of different social media platforms incorporating AI-driven tools such as ChatGPT and Perplexity on academic performance and the self-esteem of students.

**Conclusion**

This study attempted to identify the time and frequency of use of social media each day, purposes for using social media, types of devices used, state of being victims of cybercrimes, and problems encountered while using social media by university students studying in BBS, BBA, BICTE, BA-BSW, Bed, and MBS. The result shows that a smart phone is the most preferred device to use social media platforms, and the majority of university students like to spend 2 or more hours per day on social media. Such a trend may have both a positive and negative impact on the academic performance and personal well-being of students. Popularity of different social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram seems to rise dramatically in the future because these platforms have divergent attributes and are widely preferred by educated people who are the role models in society and whose behaviors are copied by the majority of people alive in the society. The probability of advancing academic excellence may reduce due to excessive use of social media platforms for non-academic purposes such as connecting with others and sharing personal experience. Educational institutions, including



Madhyabindu Multiple Campus and Kumarwanti Multiple Campus, should pay proper attention against the negative impact of social media addiction and cybercrimes on their students' academic performance and physiological and psychological well-being. Different programs and workshops related to cybercrimes and cybersecurity, mental health, virtual group projects, distance learning, etc. should be organized frequently, collaborating with concerned expert persons or organizations.

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**88 The Journal of Madhyabindu Multiple Campus, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2025**

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