

Effect of Social Media on Institutional Performance in the Nepalese Higher Education Institutions: A Qualitative Analysis Using the Extended UTAUT Model

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Abstract

Background: In this high-tech era, social media has become a major part of daily life everywhere, and people of all ages use it extensively. So, the study aims to examine the effect of social media on institutional performance under the extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology model.

Methods: The study adopted a qualitative research design, incorporating 68 key informants for interviews using purposive sampling through a semi-structured questionnaire. Interviews were conducted with administrators, faculty members, employees, and students of Tribhuvan, Kathmandu, Purbanchal, Pokhara, and Rajarshi Janak University.

Results: The research found that social media use behaviour in the higher education institutions was highly affected by performance expectancy, with participants answering

enhancements in communication, collaboration, and knowledge management that reinforced performance. Additionally, according to key informants, about 60% of social media content was deemed trustworthy, while 40% was considered deceptive, underscoring the need for information filtering and verification. Social media sites were generally thought to be user-friendly, despite sporadic connectivity and technological problems. Institutional support, peers, references, favourable circumstances, motivation, cost-benefit analysis, and habitual characteristics all had an influence on adoption and use.

Conclusion: The research concludes that social media plays a vital role in enhancing institutional performance, while users actively verify and filter information to maintain credibility and ensure the reliability of shared content.

Novelty: Several Nepalese studies have discussed information credibility concerns, but this study uniquely demonstrates how users actively validate information to maintain institutional integrity and increase performance.

Keywords: Higher Education Institutions, Institutional Performance, Qualitative Study, Social Media

1. Introduction

Social media platforms are highly popular among older adults, young adults, teenagers, and children. These platforms are widely used across different age groups for personal, academic, and professional purposes ([Barton et al., 2021](#); [Chan & Fang, 2007](#); [Ha et al., 2018](#)). In Nepal, social media has become one of the most noteworthy communication platforms in recent years. These platforms are developed to enable individuals to connect, collaborate, interact, and communicate irrespective of geographical boundaries. It is highly standard to share information, ideas, files, photographs, and videos effortlessly, post status, blogs, send messages, and engage in real-time dialogues ([Adhikari, 2024](#); [Paudel et al., 2023](#); [Sah et al., 2025](#); [Sah et al., 2026](#)).

The rapid growth of social media has fundamentally reshaped practices across academic and non-academic institutions for purposes such as marketing, research, development, and reporting, involving a wide range of stakeholders ([Athukorala & Chiran Jayasundara, 2025](#)). In the 21st century, social media has become increasingly popular in higher education institutions in Nepal ([Devkota et al. 2024](#); [Paudel et al., 2023](#)). University administrators use these platforms for institutional communication and information sharing, professors for teaching, learning, and research activities, students for academic enhancement and networking, and employees for coordination and work-related processes. Therefore, these platforms are highly utilized by all university stakeholders for academic and administrative purposes in higher education institutions.

The increased use of social media platforms resulted in the use of behavioural addiction and dependency ([Abdullahi et al., 2024](#); [Aksoy, 2018](#)). Many older adults face professional challenges that can negatively influence their levels of social engagement ([Alenezi & Brinthaupt, 2022](#); [Hashmi, 2025](#); [Thanomsing & Sharma, 2024](#)). These platforms provide an

environment where people share content, communicate, collaborate, entertain themselves, and enhance their academic and professional development ([Aksoy, 2018](#); [Chen & Wei, 2020](#); [Chu, 2020](#)). The most common social media sites are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, YouTube, TikTok, Google+, Wikipedia, LinkedIn, ResearchGate, Reddit, and others ([Adhikari, 2024](#); [Al-Bahrani *et al.*, 2017](#); [Alwreikat, 2023](#); [Chaputula *et al.*, 2020](#); [Shittu & Taiwo, 2023](#)).

Social media platforms are popular websites used by people across all sectors for their personal and professional interests ([Chaputula *et al.*, 2020](#); [Cistulli & Snyder, 2022](#); [Sah *et al.*, 2025](#); [Sah *et al.*, 2026](#)). However, excessive use of social media can lead to undesirable consequences, such as distraction, depression, anxiety, and decreased performance. Therefore, this study adopts a qualitative research approach to obtain in-depth information based on the extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2) model. The extended UTAUT model is considered suitable for this research as it integrates key constructs from eight earlier theories, including the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Motivational Model (MM), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Combined TAM and TPB, Model of PC Utilization (MPCU), Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) ([Chang, 2012](#); [Dwivedi *et al.*, 2019](#)). While previous Nepalese studies have examined social media addiction and usage patterns, few qualitative studies have systematically applied the extended UTAUT framework across university hierarchies to examine influence on institutional performance. Thus, the study aimed to examine the effect of social media on the institutional performance of leading Nepalese universities under the extended UTAUT model.

2. Review of Literature

[Aksoy \(2018\)](#) aimed to examine the factors influencing individuals' social media addiction. The research considered 25 university students who felt them as a social media addicts. The research found that social media addiction increased due to a lack of good friends, low social interaction, and fear of missing out.

[Alnjadat *et al.* \(2019\)](#) also investigated the impact of social media on academic performance. Data were gathered from 328 medical students by cross-sectional survey techniques. The research work reported that respondents spend 2 to 3 hours every day on social media. This report clearly explained that male respondents were more addicted than females.

[Alhussain \(2020\)](#) researched students' perceptions of social media platforms using qualitative research techniques. Qualitative research was conducted with 37 students through direct interviews. Data were put into SPSS Statistics 20 and NVivo 11 software for the analysis. The study reported that students' interactions with lecturers and other academic stakeholders enhance learning significantly.

[Barton *et al.*, \(2021\)](#) researched the impact of social media on academic achievements. Data were collected from 659 undergraduate and graduate students. Both predictors, social media usage and attention, significantly predicted academic performance. However, Barrot (2022)

examined over 1,600 journals, and 396 documents were analyzed using bibliometric analysis from the Scopus database. The study found that prominent platforms like Facebook, Skype, WhatsApp, and Twitter continue to draw the most interest from academics studying language acquisition.

Paudel et al. (2023) researched the impact of social media on secondary school students' academic achievement at Shree Jana Model Secondary School in Birendranagar, Surkhet, Nepal. A descriptive and exploratory research approach was used to gather data from 82 randomly chosen students through structured questionnaires and interviews. According to the results, Facebook was the most popular platform, and students utilized social media for three to five hours per day, mostly for academic chats.

Devkota et al. (2024) analyzed how the use of social media impacts their capacity for cooperation and communication. Data were collected from 250 university students using a structured questionnaire on constructivist theory, the technology acceptance model, and communication theory. The findings showed that students were not totally satisfied with peer contact for online learning through social media, but significant for the academic effort in higher education institutions.

Sah et al. (2025) researched the impact of social media language influences on students' intention to engage in academic use Behaviour at leading universities in Nepal. Data were collected from respondents based on the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology model. The results showed that social media language is highly influential on students' academic engagement.

Sah et al. (2026) also identified potential educational benefits of social media, such as knowledge transformation and exchange, that can enhance students' academic experiences at Nepal's leading universities. However, the study also revealed that behavioral intention to use social media had a minimal and statistically insignificant influence on academic performance. Based on the literature review, the results of earlier research on the relationship between social media use behaviour and institutional performance remain inconclusive. Only a small amount of qualitative research in Nepal has used the UTAUT2 model across university hierarchies to evaluate how social media use affects teachers' and students' performance. Therefore, more research is required to create a comprehensive knowledge of its institutional performance.

3. Methodology

This research considered a qualitative exploratory research design to gain an in-depth knowledge of a phenomenon. (Barbour & Barbour, 2003; Creswell, 2012). Data were gathered from 68 key informants for interviews from Tribhuvan, Kathmandu, Purbanchal, Pokhara, and Rajarshi Janak University through purposive sampling based on their position, purpose, experience, and time spent on social media use in higher education institutions. Thus, key informants for the study are sufficient for the qualitative research work (Creswell, 2012). The number of key participants is defined by data saturation, such as using a small to moderate sample size, rather than a fixed sample size (Creswell, 2014). The study considered various

respondents, including university administrators, Vice-Chancellors, Rectors, Deans, Assistant Deans, Instructors, Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, Officer Special Class to Assistant Second Class Level, and Students from PhD to Bachelor's Level.

After about 60 interviews, no noteworthy new themes, sub-themes, or insights surfaced, indicating that data saturation had been reached. However, eight further interviews were carried out to guarantee that the results were precise, comprehensive, and consistent among all university stakeholders. The interviews were conducted in both English and Nepali. However, because it was more comfortable for the participants during the interviews and is the predominant national language, Nepali was used the majority of the time. Depending on the participants' availability and convenience, each 20 to 30-minute interview was performed either in person or through a smartphone.

Even though the majority of the interviews were done in Nepali, they were all audio recorded, verbatim transcribed, and translated into English. The translated transcripts were thoroughly examined and compared to the original recordings to guarantee accuracy and maintain meaning. The Extended UTAUT2 framework was then used to conduct a thematic analysis of the data in order to find important trends about the use of social media in higher education (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2012). The investigation took into account UTAUT2's intrinsic (habit and hedonic motivation) and extrinsic (performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, enabling conditions, and price value). Furthermore, data analysis was done using ATLAS.ti 23 software, and results were displayed using thematic interpretation and word frequency (Sugarhood *et al.*, 2014). Thematic findings are reported according to codes C1 to C17. However, as the coding and analysis in this study are based on meticulous verification of themes that are seen as constraints, inter-code reliability tests are not included.

4. Results and Discussion of Qualitative Data Analysis

4.1 Demographic Characteristics Analysis

Table 1: *Demographic Appearances of the Participants*

Characteristics		Number	Percentages
Gender	Male	50	73.53
	Female	18	26.47
Age	Below 25	6	8.82
	26-35	6	8.82
	36-45	18	26.47
	46-55	11	16.18
	56-65	24	35.29
	Above 65	3	4.42
Education Status	Intermediate	7	10.29
	Bachelor's Degree	17	25.00

	Master's Degree	16	23.53
	M.Phil. Degree	2	2.94
	PhD. Degree	26	38.24
Universities	TU	19	27.94
	KU	12	17.65
	PU	14	20.59
	PoKU	13	19.12
	RJU	10	14.71

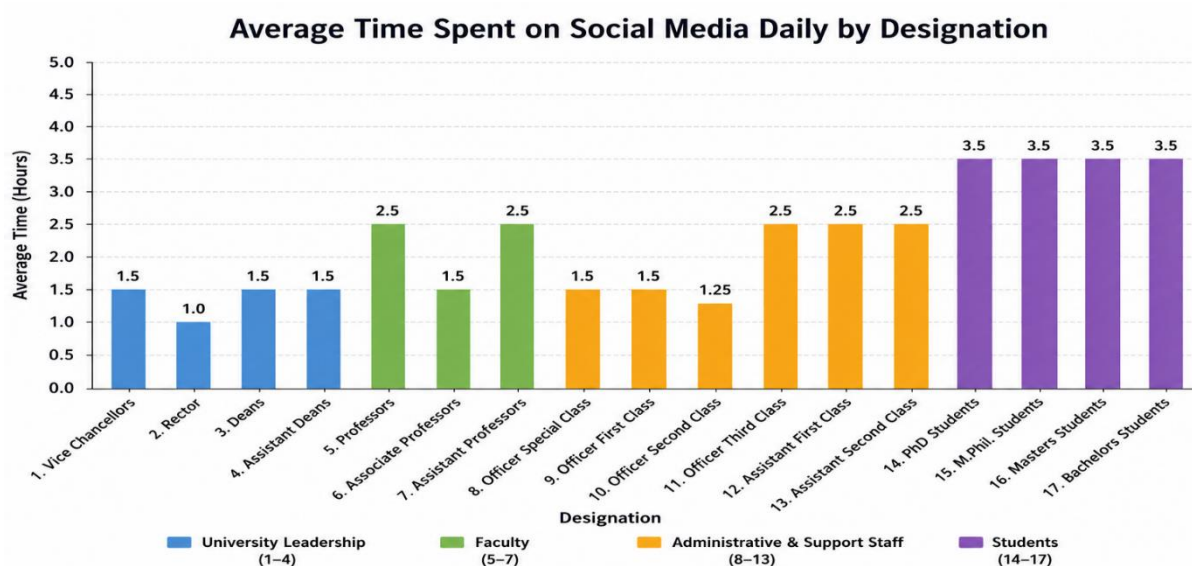
Table 1 shows that there were 68 respondents, of whom 50 were male and 18 were female. According to the age distribution, the largest proportion of respondents belonged to the 56–65 age group (35.29%), followed by those aged 36–45 (26.47%) and 46–55 (16.18%). Respondents below 25 years and those aged 26–35 each accounted for 8.82%, while participants above 65 years represented the smallest group, comprising 4.42% of the total respondents. In terms of education status, the majority of respondents were of PhD and the least were of MPhil graduates. According to the universities, most of the respondents are from Tribhuvan University, and the least were from Rajarshi Janak University. Professional appearances of the participants are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: *Professional Appearances of the Participants*

	Characteristics	Number	Percentages
Designation	Vice Chancellors	5	7.35
	Rectors	1	1.47
	Deans	6	8.82
	Assistant Deans	5	7.35
	Professors	5	7.35
	Associate Professors	5	7.35
	Assistant Professors	5	7.35
	Officers Special Class	1	1.47
	Officers First Class	4	5.88
	Officers Second Class	2	2.94
	Officers Third Class	3	4.41
	Assistants First Class	5	7.35
	Assistants Second Class	5	7.35
	PhD. Scholars	3	4.41
	M. Phil Scholars	3	4.41
	Master's Degree Students	5	7.35

	Bachelor's Degree Students	5	7.35
Experiences	Less than 5 years	6	8.82
	5 to 10 years	22	32.35
	11 to 15	17	25.00
	16 to 20	20	29.41
	More than 20	3	4.42
Effectiveness	Highly Effective	37	54.41
	Effective	28	41.18
	Neither Effective nor Ineffective	3	4.41
Satisfaction Rate	High Satisfaction	41	60.29
	Satisfaction	23	33.82
	Neither Satisfaction nor	4	5.89
	Dissatisfaction		

Table 2 demonstrates that participants represented diverse university hierarchies, including vice chancellors, rectors, deans, faculty members, administrative staff, and students. Among the 68 participants, deans constituted 8.82%, while vice chancellors, assistant deans, professors, associate professors, assistant professors, assistant first class employees, assistant second class employees, master's students, and bachelor's students each represented 7.35%. Most participants had 5–10 years (32.35%) or 16–20 years (29.41%) of professional experience. Regarding perceptions of social media use, 54.41% considered it highly effective, and 41.18% effective for institutional performance. Similarly, 60.29% of participants reported high satisfaction with social media use, while 33.82% expressed satisfaction.



Note: For ranges, mid-point values are used for plotting (e.g., 1–2 hours = 1.5 hours; 2–3 hours = 2.5 hours; 3–4 hours = 3.5 hours; 1–1.5 hours = 1.25 hours; Rarely – up to 1 hour = 1.0 hour).

Figure 1: Time Spent on Social Media Daily by Designation

Figure 1 indicates the average time spent on social in daily basis across different professional statuses and involvement. The majority of respondents, especially vice chancellors, deans, assistant deans, associate professors, and administrative officers, reported using social media for one to two hours per day. Professors, assistant professors, and a few office and assistant staff members made formed a smaller group that worked for two to three hours every day. Students pursuing bachelor's, master's, M.Phil., and doctoral degrees, on the other hand, demonstrated the highest consumption, averaging three to four hours daily. The rectors and officer second class were among the very few who reported relatively little use, ranging from infrequently to 1-1.5 hours daily.



Figure 2. Word Frequency of Mostly Used Social Media Sites

Figure 2 also demonstrates a word cloud of social media platforms used by respondents. It shows that most of the respondents' uses Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber, YouTube, Instagram, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate, followed by Gmail, LinkedIn, Google, TikTok, Messenger, Twitter, Outlook, Reddit, Snapchat, WeChat, and other platforms. Paudel *et al.* (2023) and Sharma & Kautish (2021) also found that Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, and other popular SNS platforms.

Table 3: *Purposes of Using Social Media*

University Pillars	Purposes
Administrators	Institutional communication and engagement with the relevant information Sharing important university updates, announcements, and official news quickly
Instructors	Maintaining a relationship with students and sharing academic materials Providing academic videos and lectures, networking, and sharing achievements
Students	Formal and informal communication with instructors, peers, and others Allocating educational materials and tutorials Sharing personal and professional experiences

Employees	Searching for jobs and professional communication
	Team collaboration and messaging
	Distributing training and development resources.

Table 3 shows the purposes of using social media by different stakeholders for several reasons. The university administrators use social media for institutional communication, sharing official updates, announcements, and news. Instructors also use it for communication, sharing academic resources such as notes, assignments, and materials, networking, and showcasing work. Students primarily use it for social interaction, group chat, accessing academic content and tutorials, and sharing experiences. Employees use social media for professional networking, job searching, team collaboration, and accessing training and development resources.



Figure 3. Word Frequency of the Purposes of Social Media Utilization

Figure 3 of word clouds shows that the purpose of social media use is for communication, knowledge, information, and research, through platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber, YouTube, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate. The word cloud also shows that social media is not just for any one specific purpose, but is also for many administrative and academic activities. Numerous studies indicates that social media platforms facilitate communication, information, and relationship maintenance for users ([Alwreikat, 2023](#); [Chaputula et al., 2020](#); [Paudel et al., 2023](#))

4.2 Thematic Analysis

The thematic analysis based on the extended UTAUT model was applied to analyze themes and sub-themes derived from interviews with university administrators, instructors, staff, and students, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: *Determination of Participant's Code*

Designation	Respondents Code	Number
Vice Chancellors	C1	5
Rectors	C2	1
Deans	C3	6
Assistant Deans	C4	5
Professors	C5	5
Associate Professors	C6	5
Assistant Professors	C7	5
Officers Special Class	C8	1
Officers First Class	C9	4
Officers Second Class	C10	2
Officers Third Class	C11	3
Assistants First Class	C12	5
Assistants Second Class	C13	5
PhD. Scholars	C14	3
M.Phil. Scholars	C15	3
Master's Degree Students	C16	5
Bachelor's Degree Students	C17	5
Total		68

Table 4 shows that data are coded for 68 respondents, C1 to C17 from different university levels systematically and reviewed multiple times to ensure consistency and accuracy including administrators of vice chancellors, rectors, deans, assistant deans, instructors' professors, associate and assistant professors, administrative officers, special, first, second, third, assistants first and second and students from bachelor's to PhD level. Inter-code reliability tests are omitted because the coding and analysis in this work are based on careful verification of themes that are considered limitations.

4.3 Interview Findings

The interview findings, based on the extended UTAUT themes and their sub-themes, provide a comprehensive understanding of social media and its effect on institutional performance.

4.3.1 Performance Expectancy

Vice Chancellors of several universities mentioned that social media provides valuable information and enhances knowledge, which is crucial for academic and professional growth. Social media builds confidence by enabling meaningful connections and productive communication. However, VC's also reported that it is informative, but cross-checking is important to maintain authenticity to meet expectations. It will be dangerous if we are totally dependent on any one source of information (C1).

The rectors of the university also noted that social media is important in the 21st century. It is significant to maintain easy communication to maintain personal and professional relationships. But it is highly fabricated, not highly trustworthy. So, university stakeholders must be accountable for all activities due to less reliable and trustworthy content. Therefore, he suggested that filtering all kinds of information is crucial for stakeholders before use to ensure that social media contributes positively to institutional performance (C2).

Similarly, Deans and Assistant Deans from all universities stated that social media supports academic and research activities through platforms such as ResearchGate, Google Scholar, and YouTube, which can enhance institutional performance by strengthening research output, academic collaboration, and knowledge sharing. They further noted that it helps develop skills, build talent, and boost confidence among users, thereby contributing to improved overall institutional effectiveness (C3 and C4).

Professors, Associate Professors, and Assistant Professors highlighted that trusted and verified information is essential for the effective use of social media. Although social media supports connectivity, idea generation, and academic enhancement, concerns about fake news, AI-driven misinformation, privacy risks, and credibility emphasize the need for careful and responsible use to improve institutional performance (C5-C7).

However, special and first-class officers of universities reported that official and authorized social media platforms enhance institutional performance by improving communication, stakeholder engagement, and trust through credible updates and feedback. However, reliance on unofficial content may reduce accuracy and efficiency. Likewise, second and third class officers noted that social media contributes to connectivity and knowledge sharing, though misinformation limits its full effectiveness in supporting institutional performance (C8-C11).

Assistant first- and second-class employees viewed social media as useful for networking and knowledge sharing, but also were affected by unethical behavior and misinformation. They considered about 60% of the information reliable, but 40% may be fake (C12 and C13).

PhD and MPhil Scholars stated that social media can strengthen institutional performance by providing diverse academic information and supporting research and learning, but only when users critically filter content. It also covers a wide range of topics, including education, politics, sports, and more. Similarly, Master's and Bachelor's students also responded that social media improves academic coordination, communication, and learning support, thereby contributing positively to institutional effectiveness, although its benefits depend on responsible and informed use. They also updated through group chats, and it allows them to easily discuss important matters and make plans by enhancing learning, creativity, and growth (C14-C17).

Thus, the study revealed that performance expectancy of social media improves institutional relations, knowledge, and productivity across university administrators, instructors, students, and employees supporting higher education institutional performance when used responsibly and with verified information.

4.3.2 Effort Expectancy

In terms of effort expectancy, VCs expressed that social media makes it easy to search, identify, and maintain relationships by allowing quick communication and connection with others. It is easy to develop new ideas by exposing oneself to diverse perspectives and encouraging collaboration with others through Research Gate and Google Scholar. But unnecessary, irrelevant, and negative information can also cause stress at times (C1).

Rectors stated that social media is easy to use, highly accessible, and effective for building relationships and reconnecting with long-lost friends. They emphasized that social media supports organizational goals with less effort and plays a significant role in communication and engagement (C2).

Deans and Assistant Deans of the universities felt that social media is easy to use, provides detailed information in one click, develops new ideas for future research, and connects with stakeholders. For example, during the flood, they shared exam postponement notices on very effective social media. Although they had not experienced major problems, they expressed concerns about hacking and unauthorized messages, emphasizing the importance of double authentication and account verification for security (C3 and C4).

Professors, Associate and Assistant Professors answered that social media is used to develop innovative ideas and get worldwide information easily. Sometimes it creates problems, so avoid some unregistered websites. But it can be convenient to enhance their academic performance, which supports overall institutional performance (C5-C7).

The special, and first-class officer found it easier to discover news, update directions, and institutional information that supports overall performance. However, sometimes network issues create obstacles. The second and third class officers also acknowledge that social media is a boon for all to increase knowledge and maintain talent. But the ability to handle situations has been easy to build overall performance (C8-C11).

Assistants, first and second class, also noted that social media facilitates communication and relationship building with both near and far people. It helps to generate new ideas to tackle problems, rather than similar daily activities. It avoids trouble, but is easy to operate and increases their work activity (C12 and C13).

PhD and MPhil scholars reported that social media platforms are easy to develop new ideas by providing access to a wide range of information and creative content that supports innovation and learning to increase their performance. Similarly, master's and bachelor's students found social media useful for generating research ideas, staying updated, and enhancing communication, collaboration, and relationship building. However, participants also highlighted concerns regarding rumors, misinformation, and hacking threats (C14-C17). Therefore, effort expectancy is high across all stakeholder groups, as social media is perceived as easy to use for administrative and academic activities, thereby supporting institutional performance. However, concerns about misinformation, security risks, and distractions highlight the need for responsible use to maintain its effectiveness.

4.3.3 Social Influences

VCs explained that the influence of institutions plays a noteworthy role in perceiving and utilizing social media. Recommendations from national and international delegates were seen as beneficial for standard academic research, execution of the university plan, maintaining professional relationships with stakeholders, and enhancing institutional performance (C1).

Rectors highlighted that social media was encouraged by universities, seniors, colleagues, and national and international representatives for research and professional connections. Although it is useful for updates and communication, they reported limited use during office hours and also advised subordinates to avoid excessive use during working time (C2).

Deans and Assistant Deans explained that institutional recommendations, along with influence from seniors, colleagues, and juniors, encouraged the use of social media for sharing ideas, knowledge, research, and development activities. They also recommended that PhD and MPhil scholars create profiles on platforms such as ResearchGate, Google Scholar, and LinkedIn to support academic and professional performance (C3 and C4).

Similarly, professors, associate professors, and assistant professors reported that social media use is strongly influenced by institutions, peers, seniors, students, and family members. While platforms such as TikTok and Instagram were viewed as entertaining and time-consuming, platforms like YouTube, Google Scholar, and LinkedIn were recommended for research and job-related purposes. One professor also noted that family members suggested religious content, such as Geeta Sandesh and Bhagwat programs, for relaxation and peace, which positively supported overall performance (C5-C7).

Similarly, Special Class Officers responded that academic institutions encourage the use of official sources, balanced social media usage, efficient time management, and media literacy to improve learning, creativity, and well-being, which positively supports institutional performance through informed communication and professional efficiency. First, Second, and third class officers also reported using platforms such as Viber, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Outlook email, and official institutional websites for professional development and communication with peers, seniors, and colleagues, thereby enhancing coordination, collaboration, and institutional effectiveness (C8-C11).

But the assistant first and second class employees stated that although no one specifically recommended social media platforms to them, they were already familiar with various platforms and used them for official and personal purposes to enhance work culture and professional experience, thereby contributing to institutional efficiency and communication (C12 and C13).

Similarly, PhD and MPhil scholars responded that academic institutions, professors, seniors, and colleagues significantly encouraged the use of social media for educational and research purposes, which supports institutional performance through improved academic engagement, collaboration, and knowledge sharing. Next, Master's students stated that LinkedIn is highly influential for professional connections and Twitter for information, while Bachelor's students reported that institutions encouragement in Viber, WhatsApp and other group chats to remain informed, thereby positively influenced institutional performance (C14-C17).

Thus, social influence strongly impacted uses of social media across all groups, for institutional announcement, teamwork, research, and overall activities.

4.3.4 Facility Condition

According to VCs, having access to high-tech equipment and reliable internet connections makes it easier to use social media for learning, thereby supporting their academic performance (C1).

Rectors attested to the accessibility of high-tech equipment and internet connections, both of which are necessary for efficient social media use. They conveyed trust in their capacity to use social media platforms for academic improvement in an efficient manner (C2).

Deans and Assistant Deans said they had access to dependable internet and high-tech gadgets, but their usage of social media was limited by unfavorable network circumstances. Despite these challenges, they expressed confidence in their knowledge and skills to use social media efficiently for academic and administrative purposes, thereby supporting institutional performance and communication effectiveness (C3 and C4).

Professors, associates, and assistants highlighted that the availability of high-tech devices and stable internet connections was crucial for effective use of social media in academic and professional activities. They noted that reliable internet access, particularly institutional connections, is often more efficient and effective, which supports research, messaging, and presentation (C5-C7).

Similarly, officers reported that the availability of internet services and advanced devices, however unstable network conditions sometimes disrupt official tasks and reduce work efficiency, thereby affecting institutional performance (C8-C11).

An assistant, first- and second-class, stated that possessing the necessary technical skills, along with access to reliable internet services and high-tech devices, enables them to use social media efficiently and effectively for institutional and professional purposes (C12 and C13).

PhD scholars expressed confidence in their ability to manage social media profiles effectively and reported access to high-tech devices and reliable internet services that support their academic,–activities. Similarly, MPhil scholars were confident in their ability to use social networking platforms effectively for educational purposes. The master's and bachelor respondents stated that while cellphones and other devices were readily available, their social media usage was disrupted by the poor network at institutions, but fast availability at home contributes positively to institutional performance (C14-C17).

Hence, facilitating conditions significantly influence social media use across all stakeholder groups, where strong infrastructure and technical support enhance productivity and institutional performance, while poor connectivity creates operational barriers.

4.3.5 Hedonic Motivation

VCs were encouraged to use social media for both personal and professional reasons because they found it entertaining and fascinating. Social media is a source of amusement that helps

people unwind and maintain connections. Limit use discourages irritation, conflict, misuse, and trouble (C1).

According to Rectors, social media is both entertaining and practical because it gives users access to engaging content about their institutions. Despite their enjoyment of social media, they may become agitated by inappropriate or pointless content (C2).

Social media is regarded as entertaining and fascinating, offering a venue for both amusement and scholarly interaction (C3, and C4).

According to professors, Associate and Assistant Professors replied that social media is entertaining and interesting, and it enhances both their personal and academic lives. According to some, social media can occasionally be annoying, especially when it contains unrelated and fake content (C5-C7).

Social media is entertaining, interesting, and delightful to the special and first-class officer since it facilitates communication and information access. Notifications, however, may be annoying. Due to the fact that social media keeps them entertained and informed, second and third-class officers also found it intriguing and fun, but false information creates irritations (C8-C11).

Assistants also perceived social media use fosters motivation and professional development, to a positive work culture, although overuse may lead to dependency issues (C12 and C13).

Likewise, PhD and M.Phil. scholars described social media as engaging and useful for learning, research, and communication, which strengthens institutional learning and professional outcomes. However, concerns about time consumption, addictive use, and fake news were also raised, indicating potential negative effects on concentration, academic discipline, and overall institutional performance. Bachelor's and master's level students frequently spend several hours a day on social media, and their usage patterns were described as engaging and inspiring but sometimes addictive and irritating, which may indirectly influence institutional effectiveness through reduced focus, productivity, and academic engagement (C14-C17).

Thus, Hedonic motivation influences institutional performance by encouraging engagement with social media, enhancing participation and interaction when use is balanced and purpose-driven, but excessive or unregulated use can reduce focus, efficiency, and overall institutional performance.

4.3.6 Price Value

Vice Chancellors pointed out that social media was widely viewed as a cost-effective and time-saving tool that positively contributes to institutional performance by enhancing communication efficiency, information sharing, and academic collaboration (C1).

Similarly, Rector also emphasized that although overuse may lead to time wastage, social media remains an affordable alternative to traditional communication methods, thereby improving institutional efficiency and reducing operational costs (C2).

Additionally, according to deans, social networking sites are seen as an affordable way to discover research and knowledge to improve the overall performance of institutions (C3 and C4).

Professors and Associate/Assistant Professors also highlighted that despite internet costs, social media is still economical for academic communication and connectivity, contributing to improved academic productivity and institutional effectiveness (C5-C7).

Officers special, first, second and third reported both benefits and costs, noting that while internet expenses exist, efficient use reduces time and financial waste, thereby supporting organizational performance (C8-C11).

Likewise, Assistant First and Second Class officers further confirmed that social media saves both time and money when used effectively for official purposes (C12 and C13).

Similarly, PhD, MPhil, Master's, and Bachelor's students reported that social media provides free or low-cost access to information, learning resources, and communication tools, which enhances academic engagement and outcomes (C14-C17).

Thus, Price value reflects that social media is perceived as cost-effective and time-saving, contributing to improved communication efficiency, reduced operational costs, and enhanced academic collaboration, thereby supporting institutional performance across all stakeholders.

4.3.7 Use Habit

Vice chancellors viewed social media as a motivating and inspiring habit used for specific institutional objectives. Their careful use of social media improves institutional performance by promoting communication, fostering academic innovation, encouraging stakeholder participation, and raising institutional visibility and productivity (C1).

Rector characterized their usage of social media as engaging, inspiring, promoting learning and social interaction. Their responsible use of social media contributes to institutional performance by supporting academic collaboration, communication efficiency, and knowledge sharing within the institution (C2).

Deans and Assistant Deans perceived social media as motivating for continuous learning and professional networking. Their balanced use contributes to institutional performance by enhancing academic coordination, collaboration, and effective communication within the institution. They also do not consider themselves addicted but use it as needed (C3 and C4).

Many professors, associate professors, and lecturers stated that social media is seen as a motivating habit that enhances productivity and academic engagement. Their purposeful use contributes to institutional performance by supporting teaching, research collaboration, and knowledge sharing (C5 and C7).

Officers viewed social media as a motivating and informative habit that supports communication and timely information sharing. Their responsible use contributes to institutional performance by enhancing administrative coordination, efficiency, and workplace productivity (C8-C11).

Assistants used social media in a controlled and disciplined manner when needed. Their balanced use improves institutional performance by encouraging good communication, workplace discipline, and effective administrative operation (C12 and C13).

Social media was viewed by PhD and MPhil candidates as an engaging and practical academic resource. Active use of them enhances learning productivity, research participation, academic collaboration, and knowledge exchange, all of which boost institutional success. In a similar vein, bachelor's and master's degree candidates viewed social media as an engaging and motivating educational tool. Their broad use enhances institutional performance by supporting general academic engagement, promoting collaborative learning, increasing access to academic materials, and boosting digital communication (C14–C17).

Therefore, Habit shows that all stakeholders create engaging and inspiring social media usage habits that increase institutional performance through better communication, teamwork, and information exchange. Its beneficial effects depend on its responsible and balanced use.

4.3.8 Use Behaviour

Every day, vice chancellors spend one to two hours on social media, mostly in their own time or after work. By guaranteeing targeted leadership communication, improved decision-making, and effective stakeholder involvement without interfering with essential administrative duties, this goal-oriented and balanced utilization enhances institutional performance (C1).

The Rectors spend around an hour a day on social media, frequently filtering content to steer clear of unimportant information. By boosting focused academic communication, strengthening effective leadership engagement, and improving information quality, this restricted utilization improves institutional performance (C2).

One to two hours a day are spend on social media by deans and assistant deans, primarily for academic and research objectives. By encouraging creative teaching, bolstering academic cooperation, and assisting with research-based decision-making, this enhances institutional performance (C3 and C4).

Likewise, professors, associate and assistant professors are used social media two to three hours in a day for variety of ways to network professionally and academically. By boosting academic productivity, encouraging creativity, facilitating research cooperation, and improving teaching efficacy, their use improves institutional performance (C5–C7).

Officers spent one to two hours a day on social media, mostly after work, for official and personal updates. By enhancing administrative communication, guaranteeing timely information flow, and upholding workplace discipline, this enhances institutional performance (C8–C11).

Every day, assistants spent a few hours on social media, although occasionally it was distracting. When utilized appropriately, it enhances administrative work and communication effectiveness, but overuse can have a detrimental impact on output (C12–C13).

Social media was widely used for academic reasons by PhD and MPhil students. This improves academic collaboration, knowledge exchange, and research output, all of which improve institutional performance. Similarly, while some Master's and Bachelor's students avoided

social media before exams, they used it extensively for both personal and academic objectives (C14–C17).

Therefore, use behaviour demonstrates that all stakeholder groups are generally well-rounded and motivated, positively impacting institutional performance through enhanced academic engagement, research, communication, and teamwork. However, because excessive usage may impair concentration and productivity, its effects depend on careful and managed use.

4.3.9 Institutional Performance

Vice Chancellors concurred that strategic usage of social media is influenced by performance expectations and favourable conditions. Through increased innovation, leadership communication, and goal-oriented digital engagement, this improves institutional performance (C1).

Rectors also noted that the restricted and regulated use is shaped by habit and effort anticipation. By guaranteeing intentional participation that enhances teamwork while keeping an eye on institutional objectives, this promotes institutional performance (C2).

Deans' academic use of social media is heavily influenced by performance expectations and supportive environments. Encouraging research, innovative teaching methods, and academic collaboration, this enhances institutional performance (C3 and C4).

Additionally, professors, associate and assistant professors said that social impact, hedonic motivation, and performance expectations promote active academic use. This improves academic productivity, research collaboration, and teaching quality, all of which improve institutional performance (C5–C7).

Officers' special, first, second and third class use of social media for administration and communication is influenced by favourable circumstances and usage patterns. Through effective coordination, information flow, and administrative productivity, this enhances institutional performance (C8–C11).

The moderate and task-based usage of assistants is shaped by effort anticipation and habit. Although overuse may lower productivity, this enhances communication efficiency and improves institutional performance (C12 and C13).

Performance expectations and hedonic incentives drive regular academic use of PhD to bachelors' level students. This boosts academic networking, knowledge sharing, and research output, all of which increase institutional performance. Social influence, hedonic incentive, and habit all have a big impact on student usage. This enhances institutional performance through academic engagement and collaborative learning, but distraction may occur if it is not controlled (C14–C17).

Therefore, UTAUT2 factors specifically, performance expectancy and facilitating conditions, have a positive effect on institutional performance through improved communication, cooperation, and information exchange. However, for it to be effective, institutional support, a strong infrastructure, and deliberate use are required.

Table 5: *Cross-Theme Synthesis of Key and Contradictory Findings Across UTAUT2 Themes*

UTAUT2 Theme	Key Sub-Themes	Key Findings	Contradictory Findings
Performance Expectancy	Communication, knowledge sharing, and collaboration	All groups viewed social media as beneficial for institutional performance	Concerns existed regarding 60% realistic but 40% fake, unrealistic, and unreliable information, which needs filtering.
Effort Expectancy	Ease of use, accessibility, and quick communication	Social media was generally considered easy and convenient to use	Hacking risks, distractions, and technical problems created difficulties
Social Influence	Peer influence, institutional recommendation	Institutions, colleagues, and peers encouraged adoption and use	Some participants used social media independently without institutional influence
Facilitating Conditions	Internet access, devices, and technical support	Supportive infrastructure and technical assistance improved effectiveness	Poor connectivity and unstable networks reduced efficiency
Hedonic Motivation	Engagement, interaction, entertainment	Balanced and engaging use increased participation and motivation	Excessive use caused addiction, irritation, and time wastage
Price Value	Cost effectiveness, time saving	Social media was seen as affordable and efficient	Internet costs and overuse sometimes reduce productivity
Habit	Routine use, regular engagement	Frequent use strengthened communication and collaboration	Overdependence negatively affected discipline and focus
Use Behaviour	Academic, professional, and personal use	Purpose-driven and balanced use supported productivity	Excessive and non-academic use reduced efficiency
Institutional Performance	Coordination, research, professional engagement	Responsible social media use positively influenced institutional performance	Benefits depended on responsible use, information verification, and infrastructure support

Table 5 shows that stakeholders across all designation levels generally perceived social media positively for improving communication, collaboration, research, learning, and institutional coordination. Most UTAUT2 themes indicated that social media supports institutional performance through easy access to information, academic networking, and efficient communication.

However, contradictory findings were also observed. Participants raised concerns about misinformation, distraction, addiction, hacking risks, and poor internet connectivity. Thus,

while social media enhances institutional performance, its effectiveness depends on responsible use, information verification, and adequate technological support.

5. Discussion

The results show that social media enhances academic relationships, communication, information access, and teamwork, all of which improve institutional performance. However, social media's efficacy depends on its critical and responsible use. Similar research has also shown that social media platforms improve institutional performance despite their numerous drawbacks ([Adhikari, 2024](#); [Alhussain, 2020](#)).

Performance expectancy was the most strongly supported UTAUT2 construct because stakeholders generally felt that social media enhanced academic productivity, research collaboration, communication, and institutional effectiveness. Increased internet access, institutional support, and frequent academic usage of sites like ResearchGate, Google Scholar, LinkedIn, and YouTube also provided substantial support for social influence, habit, and facilitating conditions. Thus, [Paudel et al. \(2023\)](#) and [Sharma & Kautish \(2021\)](#) also found that social network sites are popular platforms for performance expectancy.

On the other hand, because respondents mostly used social media for academic and professional goals rather than for fun or financial gain, hedonic motivation and price value received the least amount of support. It was also clear that different parties had different opinions. Stakeholder perceptions varied as well. Senior administrators, like the rectors, were more skeptical because of worries about false information, institutional credibility, privacy risks, and an over-reliance on digital platforms, whereas students were more enthusiastic about the benefits of collaborative learning, creativity, communication, and easy access to educational resources. Furthermore, [Cistulli & Snyder \(2022\)](#) found that anonymity and trust are essential components of stakeholder connections on social media.

In the context of Nepal, a previous study also emphasized the need to enhance both behavioral intention and actual use of eLearning systems. Administrators, academics, and eLearning designers should develop simple, user-friendly platforms with training, reminders, clear goals, and gamification features to increase student engagement and habitual use. These strategies can improve the adoption of eLearning and enhance students' academic performance ([Pokhrel, 2022](#); [Pokhrel & Acharya, 2024](#)). Nepal's rapid internet expansion and increased smartphone use have strengthened social media adoption in higher education, while political instability and recovery after the increased reliance on digital communication for academic continuity and coordination. However, these conditions also increased concerns regarding misinformation and unreliable online content.

Similar findings, explained in the context of India, China, Srilanka, the UK, USA, and others, social media usage is influenced by key determinants, UTAUT constructs provided by various stakeholders. Users are more likely to adopt and continue using social media when they believe it enhances their academic or professional performance, and when the platforms are easy to use, and when there is encouragement from institutions, along with adequate infrastructural

support, further strengthens adoption and sustained engagement (Abbad, 2021; Alhussain, 2020; Amadu *et al.*, 2018; Athukorala, 2018; Aydoğmuş *et al.*, 2023; Benson *et al.*, 2019; Mishra, 2022; Thanomsing & Sharma, 2024). However, compared to neighboring and other countries, Nepalese respondents appeared more cautious about the use of social media platforms, poor connectivity, and institutional reliability due to infrastructural and socio-political challenges.

6. Conclusion

Interviews with vice-chancellors, rectors, deans, faculty members, and students revealed that social media contributes positively to institutional performance when used responsibly. Participants emphasized how social media improves access to academic knowledge, fosters professional networking, improves stakeholder communication, and makes it easier to collaborate on teaching, learning, and research projects. Additionally, respondents highlighted how social media fosters creativity in teaching methods, encourages knowledge exchange, and boosts administrative effectiveness through better collaboration and quicker information distribution. Universities' overall efficacy, productivity, and institutional performance were thought to be enhanced by these advantages.

Participants did, however, also recognize that social media's beneficial effects depend on its critical and responsible use. A few respondents voiced worries about false information, distraction, exaggerated material, and excessive usage of social media platforms, even though the majority of respondents saw social media as helpful for academic and institutional operations. Some participants pointed out that if users don't critically assess and filter material before using it, it could have a detrimental impact on academic achievement, decision-making, and institutional legitimacy.

Therefore, participants emphasized the importance of responsible engagement, information verification, and balanced usage to ensure that social media enhances institutional performance rather than creating organizational or academic challenges. Institutions should establish verified official social media sites to combat misinformation and ensure the dissemination of reliable academic and institutional information.

7. Practical and Policy Implications

From a practical implication, the results provide valuable insights for the university administrators, instructors, employees, and students to strengthen digital pedagogical abilities that can support the creative integration of social media into administrative, teaching, learning, digital literacy skills, and research while reducing misinformation for responsible use.

The study also offers important policy implications for the Ministry of Education (MoE) and University Grants Commission (UGC), and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), by highlighting the positive role of social media in enhancing institutional performance and supporting its integration into national ICT and digital education strategies.

8. Limitations and Future Research

The study is limited by its cross-sectional design, in which data is based on a single point in time, restricting analysis of changes over time. As a qualitative research, it does not claim causal inference and focuses on themes and patterns of UTAUT 2 rather than cause-and-effect relationships. Thus, it will be advantageous for future studies to investigate this type of research using longitudinal studies and other models.

The results are unique to Nepal's higher education system and might not apply to other areas. As a result, results should be investigated carefully in light of the other circumstances.

9. Ethical Statement

This study was conducted in accordance with all ethical research criteria. Every participant gave their informed consent before the interviews, and participation was entirely voluntary. Confidentiality, anonymity, and the ability to withdraw from the study at any point were guaranteed to respondents. The information gathered was managed securely to safeguard participants' names and privacy, and it was only used for academic purposes.

10. Conflict of interest

The author(s) affirm that they have no conflicts of interest in relation to this study's publication.

11. Authors' Contributions

GKS conceptualized, conducted Key Informants Interview (KII) and analysis, and prepared the initial manuscript draft. **SKS** contributed to the study design, interpretation of findings, and critical revision of the manuscript. **BRA** guided the study process, reviewed, edited, and managed the manuscript. All authors read, managed, and approved the final manuscript for publication.

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