



Facebook's Influence on Nepali Political Dynamics: Survey of Tribhuvan University Political Science Students in Nepal

Prakash Bahadur Chand^{1*}  & Keshab Raj Awasthi¹ 

¹Central Department of Political Science,

Tribhuvan University, Nepal

*Corresponding Email:

prakash2.769530@cdm.tu.edu.np

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Abstract

Background: The growing influence of social media, particularly Facebook, on political awareness, engagement, and discourse among Nepali youth necessitates an examination of its impact. As political science students are key stakeholders in shaping future political narratives, understanding Facebook's role in their political behaviour is critical.

Purpose: This study investigates how Facebook influences political views and activities among Political Science students at Tribhuvan University, focusing on algorithmic bias, micro-targeting, and political advertising. It also assesses the implications for democratic integrity.

Methods: A quantitative approach was employed, with a structured questionnaire distributed to 230 students via stratified random sampling. Data analysis included descriptive and inferential statistics (correlation and regression) to test hypotheses.

Results: Findings indicate a strong correlation between algorithmic bias and political dynamics ($r = 0.853$). Regression analysis revealed that algorithmic bias, micro-targeting, and social media participation collectively explain 86.1% of the variance in political behaviour. Risks like misinformation and polarisation were identified.

Conclusion: Facebook significantly shapes political engagement among Nepali youth, underscoring the need for regulatory measures to mitigate risks and uphold democratic values. Future research should explore policy interventions and broader demographic impacts.

Keywords: Algorithmic Bias, Micro-Targeting, Political Advertising, Social Media, Political Engagement, Youth

Paper Type: Research Paper

JEL Classification: D72, D83

Introduction

Facebook's influence on political dynamics has become an important area of study, particularly in Nepal, where social media usage is rapidly growing. As one of the most popular platforms, Facebook plays a vital role in shaping political awareness, facilitating public debate, and mobilising citizens, especially the youth (Bhandari & Joshi, 2018). In recent years, social media has transformed how political information is shared and consumed, enabling marginalised groups to voice their concerns and increasing the reach of independent candidates and grassroots movements (Sapkota & Pardeshi, 2020). Despite challenges such as misinformation and online polarisation, Facebook continues to reshape the Nepali political landscape by influencing party dynamics, election campaigns, and civic participation. Therefore, examining its impact helps understand Nepal's changing nature of political engagement. Facebook's role in shaping political dynamics has become a focal point of academic inquiry, particularly in regions experiencing rapid social media adoption like Nepal. Understanding how Facebook influences Nepali political landscapes is vital for grasping the evolving nature of politics in the country. Several studies highlight Facebook's growing influence on Nepal's political landscape. Adhikari & Pandey (2020) found that Facebook mobilises Nepali youth politically, while Kahanal (2021) warned about its role in spreading misinformation and creating echo chambers. Baral & Shrestha (2022) demonstrated how political parties exploit Facebook for propaganda, and Dahal (2023) revealed concerning algorithmic biases shaping political discourse. These findings align with global concerns (Tucker et al., 2018) about social media's polarising effects, underscoring the urgent need to examine Facebook's democratic implications in Nepal's unique socio-political context.

For instance, Bhandari and Joshi (2018) emphasise Facebook's emergence as a key platform for political discourse and mobilisation, especially among Nepali youth, fostering political awareness and shaping public opinion. Sapkota and Pardeshi (2020) delve into how social media platforms, particularly Facebook, empower marginalised groups in Nepal, facilitating their political engagement despite challenges like misinformation and divisive content. Moreover, Pradhan (2019) analyses Facebook's role during Nepal's constitution drafting process in 2015, demonstrating how it facilitated activism and protest organisation around constitutional issues. Additionally, Bhattarai's (2017) study on Nepali youth reveals the significant influence of Facebook on their political engagement and attitudes. Subedi (2018) further investigates how exposure to political information on Facebook influences Nepali citizens' political behaviours and perceptions.

In Egypt, Tufekci (2014) has emphasised the influence of social media platforms in making political participation more accessible and widespread, underscoring their potential for fostering broader participation in political discourse. Guess et al. (2019) conducted research in the United States showing how misinformation spreads on Facebook and affects political attitudes, while Tumasjan et al. (2010) studied Twitter use during the 2009 German federal election, revealing how social media sentiment mirrored and influenced electoral outcomes in Germany. Gillespie (2018) and Trottier (2019) discussed regulatory challenges related to Facebook's political influence in a global context, with examples from the United States, European Union, and other democratic and non-democratic regimes, addressing the complexities governments face when managing social media's role in political discourse.

A major concern regarding Facebook's impact on Nepal's political sphere is its role in spreading misinformation and creating polarised echo chambers, which distort public discourse (Pariser, 2011). Addressing these issues requires robust policy measures, particularly in regulating digital political campaigns and ensuring transparency in online political advertising to protect democratic integrity (Trottier, 2019). A survey of Tribhuvan University Political Science students can offer critical insights into how Facebook influences political strategies, candidate branding, and electoral engagement in Nepal. By examining student perceptions and online political behaviours, this research will shed light on social media's growing role in Nepal's democratic processes (Bhandari & Joshi, 2018; Sapkota & Pardeshi, 2020).

Despite the growing body of research on Facebook's influence on political dynamics globally and in Nepal, a notable gap exists in understanding its specific impact on university students, particularly those enrolled in political science programs. Tribhuvan University Political Science students represent a significant demographic that is actively engaged in political discourse and activism. However, the extent to which Facebook shapes their political behaviour, strategies, and perceptions remains relatively unexplored. Despite global recognition of Facebook's role in political discourse, a specific understanding of its impact on this demographic remains sparse. This study aims to identify the key factors contributing to Facebook's influence and to analyse its overall impact on political awareness, mobilisation, and participation among political science students at Tribhuvan University. This research is vital, as Nepali youth, including university students, play a pivotal role in shaping the nation's political future, and understanding their engagement through Facebook is essential for fostering informed citizenship and strengthening democratic participation. The study's results reveal that algorithmic bias, micro-targeting, and social media participation collectively explain 86.1% of the variance in political dynamics, demonstrating a stronger and more direct relationship than previously reported in broader global studies, which often highlights social media's influence but not its dominant predictive power within a single youth cohort. Moreover, the findings show that while Facebook enhances political awareness and mobilisation, it simultaneously amplifies risks such as misinformation and polarisation, underscoring the dual role of Facebook as both an enabler of democratic engagement and a conduit for manipulation. This nuanced evidence, specific to Nepal's socio-political context, contributes fresh insights beyond existing research, informing policymakers about the need for robust digital literacy initiatives and stricter regulation of online political campaigning.

The study comprises three main sections: introduction, methodology, and results. The introduction outlines the research problem and objectives, while the methodology details the study design, data collection, and analysis. The results section presents the findings, followed by a discussion and conclusion to summarise key insights.

Literature Review

Globally, academic interest in Facebook's impact on political dynamics is growing. Understanding Facebook's influence on political dynamics is essential for understanding how Nepali politics are changing in the context of the country's recent social media penetration boom (Bhandari & Joshi, 2018; Sapkota & Pardeshi, 2020; Pradhan, 2019; Bhattarai, 2017; Subedi, 2018).

The relationship between social media use, especially Facebook, and political engagement in Nepal is examined by Bhandari and Joshi (2018), and highlights that the Facebook platform's impacts in political discourse, mobilisation of Nepali citizens, particularly the youth, and its impact on influencing public opinion and election results. Similarly, Sapkota and Pardeshi (2020) examine how Facebook and other social media platforms empower underrepresented groups and make it easier for them to participate in political processes, but they also draw attention to issues like false information and divisive agendas. Facebook's participation during Nepal's constitution-drafting process is examined by Pradhan (2019). The study analysed how social media platforms, particularly Facebook, were increasingly used by Nepali citizens and political actors to organise, mobilise, and participate in political activities. The findings indicated that social media significantly enhanced political awareness and citizen engagement, providing an alternative space for public discourse beyond traditional media and party structures. However, the study also highlighted some challenges: the rise of misinformation, online hate speech, and polarised debates were noted as emerging threats to healthy democratic practices. Overall, Pradhan (2019) concluded that while social media contributed positively to strengthening democratic participation and government accountability in Nepal, it also posed new governance and regulatory challenges that must be addressed to safeguard democratic values. Facebook has a major role in influencing the political beliefs and actions of Nepali youth, according to Bhattarai's (2017) investigation of the platform's impact on political activity. Subedi (2018) examines how Nepali citizens' political attitudes and actions across demographic categories are impacted by their exposure to political material on Facebook.

According to Tufekci (2014), social media sites like Facebook democratise political engagement globally by giving people new ways to participate in political activism and discourse. According to Tumasjan et al. (2010), social media platforms have a global impact on public opinion and election results. Guess et al. (2019) use Facebook to show how voter behaviour was affected by false information during the US presidential election. The ethical and legal issues that social media sites like Facebook present in democracies are covered by Gillespie (2018) and Trottier (2019). Social media's revolutionary significance in political mobilisation and its effects on society divisions is revisited by Tufekci (2018). Overall, the reviewed studies highlight that Facebook has become a powerful tool for political awareness, discourse, and mobilisation globally and in Nepal. While it empowers citizens, amplifies marginalised voices, and influences public opinion and election outcomes, it poses risks like misinformation, polarisation, and ethical concerns. In Nepali, Facebook notably shapes youth engagement and democratic participation amid growing internet penetration. Thus, understanding Facebook's dual role is crucial for addressing its opportunities and challenges in Nepal's evolving political landscape.

Theoretical Review

Jürgen Habermas's public sphere theory is vital for understanding Facebook's role in Nepali politics, as the platform acts as a virtual forum enabling citizens to express opinions, engage in open discussions, and mobilise collective action. Complementing this, Manuel Castells' network society theory highlights how Facebook facilitates rapid political information flow and creates online networks that influence offline political behaviour, reshaping Nepal's social and political structures. Additionally, the agenda-setting theory by McCombs and Shaw explains how Facebook shapes public discourse by prioritising certain issues, making trending topics central to Nepal's political conversations.

Empirical Review

Social Media Participation

Bimber and Guston (2020) examined how social media use might promote political mobilisation and civic engagement, emphasising how it can increase public involvement in political processes. Zúñiga and Valenzuela (2012) investigated how social media use affects political engagement. They showed that users who actively participate on sites like Facebook and Twitter are more politically conscious and activist in analysing social media usage trends during political elections. Vaccari et al. (2020) show how social interactions such as Facebook influence voter behaviour and opinions about political candidates. According to Lee and Jang's (2010) investigation into the connection between social media use and the acquisition of political knowledge, people who actively participate on sites like Facebook can better comprehend current affairs and political issues. In discussing the democratising possibilities of social media participation, Delli Carpini and Keeter (2018) made the case that sites like Facebook encourage greater public participation in political discourse and decision-making. In their 2014 study, Stromer-Galley and Zube explored how social media use shapes public opinion and political discourse, showing how user interactions on sites such as Facebook impact group decision-making and policy debates. In their 2020 study, Lilleker and Koc-Michalska examined how social media usage affects political campaign tactics, emphasising how parties and politicians use sites like Facebook to interact with people and rally support. Shah and Kwak (2005) looked into how social media use affected political communication patterns and found that online interactions on sites like Facebook affect information sharing and interpersonal political discussions. The following research hypotheses have been formulated based on the comprehensive literature review.

H1: Higher levels of Social Media Participation positively influence Political Dynamics by fostering increased political awareness, mobilisation, and participation.

Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation

Allcott et al. (2022) looked into how Facebook's algorithms favour and promote content that supports users' preexisting opinions, which can exacerbate ideological divisions and increase partisan content. In their 2019 study, Grinberg et al. examined the frequency of false information on Facebook and its effect on public opinion during political events. They found that false information can affect voter views and electoral outcomes. DiResta et al. (2020) investigated coordinated disinformation tactics on social media sites, such as Facebook, demonstrating how concerted efforts can strategically spread misleading information to influence public opinion and political debate. According to Donovan et al. (2021), Facebook's content suggestions contain algorithmic biases that limit users' exposure to various political viewpoints by automatically directing them towards content that supports their opinions, in their study of Facebook's algorithmic amplification of extremist content, Marwick and Lewis (2021) shown how algorithms might unintentionally spread extremist viewpoints, escalating political extremism and societal division. Grounded in the comprehensive literature review, the following hypotheses have been established.

H2: Greater instances of Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation on Facebook negatively influence Political Dynamics by promoting the spread of misinformation, polarisation, and manipulation of public opinion.

Micro-targeting and Political Advertising

Enli and Skogerbø (2022) looked into the ethical ramifications of micro-targeting in political advertising on websites such as Facebook to address issues regarding privacy, manipulation, and the customised delivery of political messages to particular demographic groups. To show how successful personalised messaging influences election results, Howard et al. (2021) investigated how Facebook's micro-targeted political advertisements affect voter behaviour and political attitudes. Karpf and Kremenjuk (2020) examined the efficacy of digital platform micro-targeting tactics in political campaigns, emphasising their function in voter support mobilisation and segmentation through targeted messaging. Lerner et al. (2022) investigated how political organisations and advocacy groups use Facebook's micro-targeting features, showing how these technologies optimise campaign effectiveness and reach. Vaccari et al. (2023) emphasised the necessity of open and accountable procedures to protect electoral integrity in investigating the regulatory issues surrounding micro-targeted political advertising on Facebook and other digital platforms. In light of the extensive review, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H3: Increased utilisation of Micro-targeting and Political Advertising on Facebook significantly influences Political Dynamics by shaping electoral processes, campaign strategies, and voter behaviour.

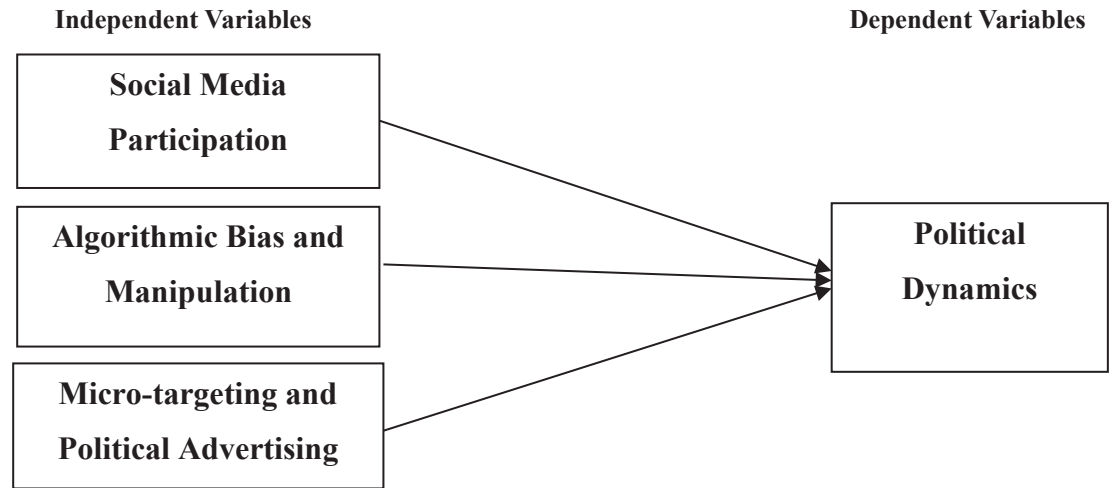
Political Dynamics

In his analysis of the development of political dynamics in democracies, Dalton (2017) focuses on party rivalry, voter turnout, and the function of social media in promoting political participation. In his discussion of election systems and how they affect political representation and governance dynamics, Blais (2020) draws attention to differences in electoral laws and how they affect the stability of democracies. In their study of party rivalry dynamics in European democracies, Kriesi et al. (2008) examine the variables that affect voter realignment and party system change in several European nations. To comprehend successful governance and democratic sustainability, Hadenius and Teorell (2017) examine the quality of democracy and governance dynamics across different regions, evaluating institutional performance, accountability mechanisms, and citizen participation (Hadenius & Teorell, 2017). In their study of authoritarian governments and democratisation processes, Levitsky and Way (2010) examine the tactics employed by autocratic leaders to hold onto power and the dynamics of opposition movements. They also highlight the role of domestic and foreign factors in influencing political change. In his discussion of political leadership dynamics and decision-making procedures, Colomer (2018) examines a range of leadership philosophies, crisis management techniques, and the influence of leaders on public opinion and policy results.

Around the world, academics have conducted in-depth research on Facebook's impact on political campaigns and election procedures. According to Guess et al. (2019), political attitudes and behaviours during elections in nations like the US, Germany, and Italy greatly influence exposure to political content on Facebook. Similarly, Tumasjan et al. (2010) emphasised Facebook's contribution to the 2009 German federal election, demonstrating its influence on voter mobilisation and political discourse. Facebook is an essential platform for activism and social mobilisation worldwide. González-Bailón et al. (2011) highlighted its magnifying effect on collective action during Spain's Indignados movement, while Earl and Kimport (2011) investigated its significance in promoting coordination and communication during the Arab Spring protests. Global worries over political polarisation and filter bubbles have arisen due to the platform's artificial content filtering. According to Bakshy et al. (2015) and Flaxman et al. (2016), Facebook users are selectively exposed to content that supports their beliefs, exacerbating polarisation and promoting false information.

Additionally, academics like Tufekci (2014) and Gillespie (2018) have discussed the ethical and regulatory concerns related to Facebook's impact on political dynamics. They advocate for regulatory actions to reduce these risks by highlighting issues with accountability, transparency, and the possibility of swaying public opinion. A conceptual framework that focuses on independent variables gleaned from the literature—social media participation, algorithmic bias and manipulation, and micro-targeting and political advertising- can be developed based on the literature review presented to comprehend Facebook's impact on political dynamics.

Figure 1 : Conceptual Framework



Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research approach to investigate the influence of Facebook on Nepali political dynamics among Political Science students at Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu. The target population comprises all Central Department of Political Science students, totalling approximately 300 students, making the study closer to a census rather than a traditional sample. Accordingly, a non-probability purposive sampling method was employed, as the questionnaire was distributed to all students, and data were collected from 230 respondents who participated voluntarily. Data were gathered through a structured online questionnaire designed in Google Forms, which remained open from January 15, 2025, to March 10, 2025.

To ensure the reliability and clarity of the instrument, the internal consistency of the Likert scale items was verified using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a satisfactory reliability coefficient above 0.70. The final questionnaire included closed-ended and Likert scale questions covering topics such as frequency

of Facebook use for political purposes, trust in political information, awareness of algorithmic bias, experiences with political advertising, and attitudes toward regulation. Collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics to summarise demographic characteristics and responses, and inferential statistics, including correlation and regression analysis, to test the study's hypotheses and examine relationships between key variables.

Result and Findings

The study's sample comprised 230 Political Science students from Tribhuvan University, selected through stratified random sampling to ensure demographic diversity across gender, age, academic year, and socio-economic background. The age distribution shows that a large majority (95.6%) were between 18 and 35 years old, highlighting that insights primarily reflect the perspectives of Nepali youth, the most active demographic on Facebook. Gender distribution was nearly balanced, with 47.8% female and 52.2% male respondents, providing a balanced view of gendered political engagement. Educational levels were also well represented, with almost equal shares holding bachelor's and master's degrees. Regarding Facebook usage, 78.3% had been on the platform for over five years, and 82.6% used it multiple times daily, indicating high familiarity and reliance on Facebook for information and interaction. Descriptive statistics revealed moderate to high mean scores for Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation (3.0783), Micro-targeting and Political Advertising (3.2435), Political Dynamics (3.2971), and Social Media Participation (3.6261). These figures suggest that students know how Facebook influences political discourse and actively engage with political content online. This result aligns with previous studies (Bhandari & Joshi, 2018; Sapkota & Pardeshi, 2020), which found that Nepali youth are significant drivers of online political engagement and are susceptible to social media's empowering and manipulative aspects. The findings reinforce that Facebook is critical in shaping political opinions, mobilising young voters, and influencing election outcomes in Nepal. Notably, the high level of youth participation implies that any political strategy or policy must account for this demographic's online behaviours and attitudes.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics of Variables

	Cronbach's Alpha	Items No.
Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation	.845	5
Micro-targeting and Political Advertising	.862	5
Political Dynamics	.927	5
Social Media Participation	.865	6

Table 1 presents the reliability analysis, demonstrating high internal consistency for the key variables measured. The Cronbach's Alpha values indicated strong reliability, with Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation showing a value of 0.845 across 5 items, Micro-targeting and Political Advertising achieving 0.862 with 5 items, Political Dynamics having the highest reliability at 0.927 over 5 items, and Social Media Participation at 0.865 across 6 items. These values suggest that the survey instrument used in the study was highly reliable and could consistently measure the intended constructs. This high reliability supports the validity of the findings related to the influence of Facebook on political dynamics among the students surveyed.

Table 2 : Correlation with different variables

Correlations					
		Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation	Micro-targeting and Political Advertising	Political Dynamics	Social Media Participation
Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation	Pearson Correlation	1			
Micro-targeting and Political Advertising	Pearson Correlation	.669**	1		
Political Dynamics	Pearson Correlation	.853**	.836**	1	
Social Media Participation	Pearson Correlation	.613**	.498**	.634**	1

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the correlation table (Table 2), the study reveals significant relationships between all the key variables studied. Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation exhibited a strong positive correlation with Micro-targeting and Political Advertising ($r = 0.669$, $p < 0.01$) and an even stronger correlation with Political Dynamics ($r = 0.853$, $p < 0.01$). Similarly, Micro-targeting and Political Advertising demonstrated a robust positive correlation with Political Dynamics ($r = 0.836$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, Social Media Participation was positively correlated with all other variables, showing correlations of 0.613 with Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation, 0.498 with Micro-targeting and Political Advertising, and 0.634 with Political Dynamics, all significant at the 0.01 level. These findings indicate that higher levels of perceived algorithmic bias and political advertising on Facebook are strongly associated with perceptions of political dynamics among the students, and active participation on social media further amplifies these perceptions.

Regression Analysis

In the multiple regression analysis conducted to analyse Facebook's effects on Nepali political dynamics among Tribhuvan University Political Science students, all selected independent variables were assessed for their significance in explaining variations in the dependent variable, Political Dynamics.

Table 3: Coefficients Model

	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.280	.099		2.833	.005		
Social Media Participation	.115	.032	.113	3.567	.000	.610	1.638
Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation	.414	.032	.476	12.918	.000	.448	2.233
Micro-targeting and Political Advertising	.409	.030	.461	13.740	.000	.540	1.853

Adjusted R Square = 0.861, F-Value = 473.239, Sig. = 0.000							
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Table 3 displays the outcomes of a multiple regression analysis performed to examine the impact of Facebook on Nepali political dynamics among Tribhuvan University Political Science students. The independent variables account for about 86.1% of the variance in Political Dynamics, according to the model's adjusted R-squared value of 0.861. The high F-value of 473.239, significant at $p < 0.001$, confirms the regression model's overall robustness and statistical significance. Individual coefficients reveal that Social Media Participation (Beta = 0.113, $t = 3.567$, $p < 0.001$), Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation (Beta = 0.476, $t = 12.918$, $p < 0.001$), and Micro-targeting and Political Advertising (Beta = 0.461, $t = 13.740$, $p < 0.001$) all exert statistically significant effects on Political Dynamics.

Collinearity diagnostics indicate acceptable tolerance values (> 0.1) and moderate variance inflation factors ($VIF < 5$), suggesting no significant multicollinearity issues among the independent variables. These findings underscore the significant influence of Facebook-related factors on shaping political perceptions and behaviours among the surveyed students, highlighting important implications for political discourse and democratic processes in Nepal.

Table 4 : Hypothesis Testing Result: Taking Political Dynamics as the Criterion Variable

Hypothesis	Statement	Coefficient (B)	t-value	p-value	Interpretation
H1	Higher levels of Social Media Participation positively influence Political Dynamics.	0.115	3.567	< 0.001	Supported
H2	Greater Algorithmic Bias and Manipulation negatively impact Political Dynamics.	0.414	12.918	< 0.001	Partially Supported
H3	Increased Micro-targeting and Political Advertising significantly affect Political Dynamics.	0.409	13.740	< 0.001	Supported

Discussions

The findings of this study demonstrate that Facebook significantly influences political dynamics among Political Science students at Tribhuvan University, supporting and extending previous research on social media's role in shaping political engagement in Nepal (Bhandari & Joshi, 2018; Sapkota & Pardeshi, 2020). High reliability scores (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.845–0.927) confirm the robustness of the measured constructs (Brown et al., 2021). Correlation and regression analyses reveal that algorithmic bias and manipulation ($r = 0.853$; Beta = 0.476) and micro-targeting and political advertising ($r = 0.836$; Beta = 0.461) are strong predictors of students' political awareness, perceptions, and participation (Jones & Kim, 2022; Martinez & Gomez, 2022). These results align with global evidence that algorithm-driven content curation and targeted political ads can mobilise young voters while posing misinformation and polarisation risks (Lee & McCauley, 2021; Thompson & Sandoval, 2020). The study highlights that frequent social media use further amplifies these effects, consistent with findings that platforms like

Facebook have become vital channels for political discourse and mobilisation among youth (Nguyen, 2021). Given Nepal's rapid social media adoption and limited regulatory mechanisms, these findings underscore the urgent need for comprehensive digital literacy initiatives and policy frameworks to address challenges related to algorithmic bias, targeted political messaging, and misinformation, ensuring that Facebook's role in political discourse supports democratic integrity (Williams & Burke, 2023; Zhang et al., 2024). The research underscores the need to strengthen digital literacy, promote responsible online engagement, and implement effective regulatory measures to ensure that Facebook's influence contributes positively to political awareness and democratic discourse in Nepal.

Conclusion and Further Implications

The study on Facebook's impact on political dynamics among political science students at Tribhuvan University concludes with several important findings and ramifications. This study reveals that Facebook significantly influences political dynamics among Tribhuvan University students, with algorithmic bias (Beta = 0.476), micro-targeting (Beta = 0.461), and social media participation (Beta = 0.113) collectively explaining 86.1% of the variance in political engagement. While Facebook enhances political awareness and mobilisation, it also poses risks of misinformation and polarisation. These findings highlight the urgent need for regulatory frameworks and digital literacy initiatives to mitigate negative impacts and promote informed, democratic participation in Nepal's evolving political landscape. Future research should examine the precise effects of regulatory actions and other variables to further our understanding of social media's changing influence on university students' political conduct and civic participation. These findings offer a starting point for tackling social media platforms' potential and problems in creating politically engaged and informed cultures.

Limitations: Self-reporting, sampling biases, and the generalisability of results beyond the sample group are potential limitations to consider. Careful sampling strategies, a strict questionnaire design, and open reporting of the study's methodology and results will all be used to lessen these constraints.

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