

# Social Media And Youth In Nepal

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**Abstract-** Adopting social media is considered normal in the recent days and it has become an integral part of everyday life. As in other parts of the world, it has highly influenced in Nepal as well with users over one-third of the total population. Particularly the youth of Nepal are highly aware of social media. The present study aims to explore the youth's awareness on the internet and social media usage in Nepal. Descriptive method was followed for the research where youth (students) of age group 15-24 years were considered as sample units. By applying stratified random sampling, 512 samples from Secondary to Master level were selected from various schools and campuses of Kathmandu Valley. The researcher self-administered the survey with all close-ended questions. The study concludes that Facebook dominates the rest of the social media considered for the study and LinkedIn being the least used. The youth's frequency of social media usage is immensely high and an average of 2 hours' time spending daily, mostly for social networking. In addition, the youth of age group 15-19 years are fond of using social media for entertaining while ages 20-24 years utilized in social networking. Determining the significant benefits of social media, youth can contribute remarkable rewards in our society if treated in a good manner.

**Keywords-** Internet, Social Media, Youth.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Everything is taking the shape of social concept. The trend of socialization has particularly transformed the youth's experiences and behaviors. The sharing of day-to-day activities over the novel social platforms has become youth's integral part. According to the Sherman from LYFE Marketing, youth are spending sufficient time online than engaging in anything else. The practices of social media are considered normal in the recent days and have become an integral part of everyday life.

As in other parts of the world, social media has influenced in Nepal as well since a couple of years before. It is totally a new approach to the society of Nepal but the exponential growth in this area left behind to be a new, creating a buzz word among the people of all ages. According to Nepal Telecommunications Authority, the data/ internet penetration has reached to 63.17% by mid-December 2017 (NTA, 2018). The rapid technological development of the internet and social

media have helped people to interact with the high-level officials including the central administration, security agencies and other concerned bodies (Dahal and Ghimire, 2016). As the internet users have increased, a number of social media users have also flourished. Not limited to that, a number of Nepal based social media sites also erupted on the floor such as NepalNepal, Hamrobook, Sangaalo, Meropost, Saathisingi, Meet etc. Numeral studies in Nepal have declared that Facebook is popular among all other social media (Rai and Moktan, 2014; CMRN, 2014; Pandey, Baskota, and Shrestha, 2015). Facebook has 9.3 million users and one million Instagram users in Nepal as of January 2018 (HootSuite, 2018). The market share of popular social media in Nepal as of March 2018 is shown in Figure 1 (StatCounter, 2018).

Most of the past studies on social media were based on different perspectives in other countries. The present study covers the most in the context of Nepali youth aged 15-24 years. The present study explores the awareness of the internet and social media usage among youth and thereby involvement in the five widely used social media sites namely Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube.

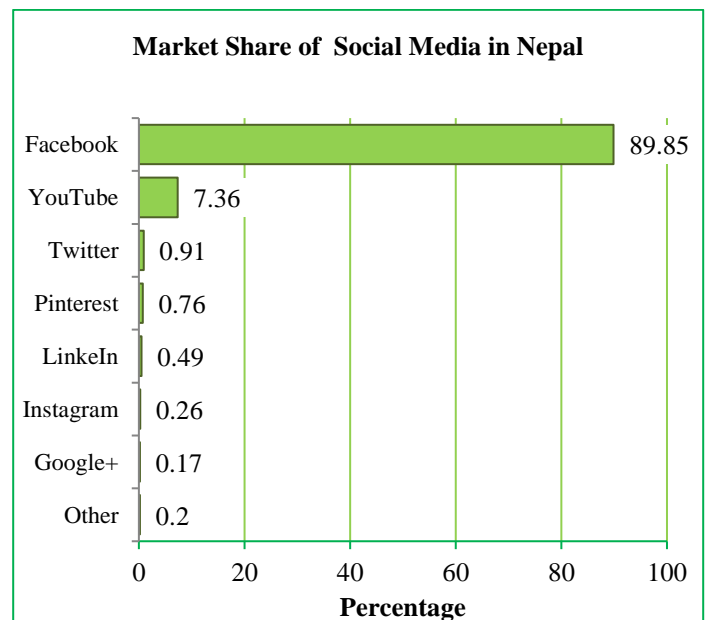


Figure 1 Market Share of Social Media in Nepal- March 2018

Source: StatCounter, 2018

## II. STUDY AREA

Kathmandu Valley is the most developed and populated place in Nepal. Since the capital of Nepal lies in the valley, it is facilitated by the country's every latest technological advancement. It is one of the major reasons for considering the research area. The valley comprises of three major districts namely Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur covering an area of 899 square kilometers but the area of the valley as a whole is 665 square kilometers only (Pant and Dongol, 2009). The population of the valley is 2,517,023 as per Nepal Census (CBS, 2011)

### Youth Overview

Youth is the transition period of dependent childhood to independent adulthood. The government of Nepal has defined youth in the National Youth Policy, 2015 as a citizen within the age brackets of 16 to 40 years. United Nations has defined youth as the person between the ages of 15 to 24 years (UNESCO, n.d.). The present study considered youth between the ages of 15 to 24 years. According to the Population Reference Bureau (2017), the world population in 2017 was 7.5 billion which includes 1.2 billion youth. Youth covers 20% of Nepal's total population and Kathmandu Valley covers around one-fourth of total valley's population.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

As the social media is novel and phenomenal, only limited numbers of research studies have been carried out in Nepal. Although with the available resources, the following works of literature have been reviewed.

Many countries' government is marching to show their presence in the digital space. But Nepal government has brought a regulation bar in the social media mainly Facebook during the office hours in the central administrative wing of Nepal (Rai and Moktan 2014). They also revealed that 79% of government officials are unaware of any rules, regulation, and policies for the use of social media in the Government of Nepal. A research study on Journalists by the Center for Media Research-Nepal (2014) revealed that e-mail and social networking services were highly used by the journalists and 92% of the Journalists were on Facebook which is their major source of information after news sites. Regarding informative nature of social media, Thakur (2016) found that social media has an immense power for utilizing it in educational and promotional activities of health-oriented issues. On the other hand, Pant, Adhikari and Poudel (2016) revealed that

adolescents had inadequate knowledge regarding the use of online social media for health promotion. Actually, social media is a better medium for information and notices (Pandey, Baskota, and Shrestha, 2015). They noticed that Facebook has been the most effective social media than any other Local Bodies' official web pages for communicating public notices, news and other information in the Eastern part of Nepal.

International studies on social media revealed that the majority of the youth use social media for communications (Ali, Iqbal, and Iqbal, 2016; Nwazor and Godwin-Maduikwe 2015; Khedo 2013) and networking (Khurana 2015). Several studies have also found youths' engagement towards entertainment (Rithika and Selvaraj, 2013; Khan, 2012). Besides these uses and benefits, Rallings (2015) highlighted that social media plays a significant role in learning and job opportunities. Rashmi and Neetu (2014) also focused that social networking can become a research network as well as learning network. Khedo et al. (2013) stated that social media encourage student's engagement in a higher level of intellectual developments and knowledge. Chan-eetoo and Rathacharan (2011) came up with findings that, 19 to 24 years women are more active on social media.

## IV. OBJECTIVES

The objective of the study is to analyze the internet and social media usage by the youth of Nepal.

## V. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey method and the methodologies used for data collection were primary and secondary data. The qualitative data for the study was collected through a survey schedule, which was then converted into quantitative. The survey covered all structured close-ended questions to minimize the diversity of responses. The survey samples were considered as a primary source of data and sources from various journals, websites, conference papers, thesis, reports, government and non-government published and unpublished articles etc. were considered as a secondary source of data for the study.

The researcher followed stratified random sampling techniques for the study. Samples were drawn from thirty schools and campuses. The study included both private and community based educational institutions. Samples consisted of youth respondents of ages 15-24 years representing from diverse faculties and levels to minimize the biases as far as possible. The respondent who participated in the survey possessed at least one account in any of the five social media

sites viz. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube. Before landing on the field, the questionnaires were pre-tested by administering it to examine the simplicity, clarity and technical difficulties. The survey was self-administered by the researcher and data were collected from January 2017 to March 2017. The minimum sample size 384 was determined by Krejcie and Morgan’s (1970) formula. In return, a total of 523 student’s samples were accumulated from the field survey. But 11 samples were excluded during processing as they did not meet the criterion of the study. Thus, only 512 samples were considered as sample units for the study. The collected data were sorted out, processed and analyzed by incorporating statistical software, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

**VI. RESULTS**

The findings of the survey are tabulated, illustrated and interpreted as below.

**6.1 Demographic Profile**

The sex distribution shows that 53.3% of the respondents were female while 46.7% were male. The maximum number of 77 respondents was observed at the age of 21 years and minimum of 32 in the age of 24 years. Likewise, when categorized into two age groups of five years’ difference as 15-19 years and 20-24 years, there were 252 (49.2%) respondents in 15-19 years and 260 (50.8%) in 20-24 years age group. There were 57.53% of female respondents in 15-19 age group and 49.23% in the ages 20-24 years. The education was grouped into secondary (up to 12 grades) and higher education (above grade 12). The result shows that 215 (42%) respondents were from secondary education and 297 (58%) from higher education. In the marital status, 509 (99.4%) respondents were single while 3 (0.6%) of them were married who were all female. In employment, 451 (88.8%) respondents were revealed unemployed, 35 (6.9%) were employed and 22 (4.3%) respondents were self-employed as shown in Table 1.

<b>Employment</b>	Self-Employed	22	4.3
	Employed	35	6.9
	Unemployed	451	88.8

**6.2. Internet**

**6.2.1 Frequency of Internet Usage**

A maximum number of 72.9% respondents browsed the internet several times a day while 16.3% respondents had a habit of browsing the internet at least once a day. Likewise, 8.8% surf the internet few times a week whereas 1.6% respondents used it once a month. Only 0.4% respondents showed different habits other than choices provided on the usage of the internet. The result is illustrated in Figure 2.

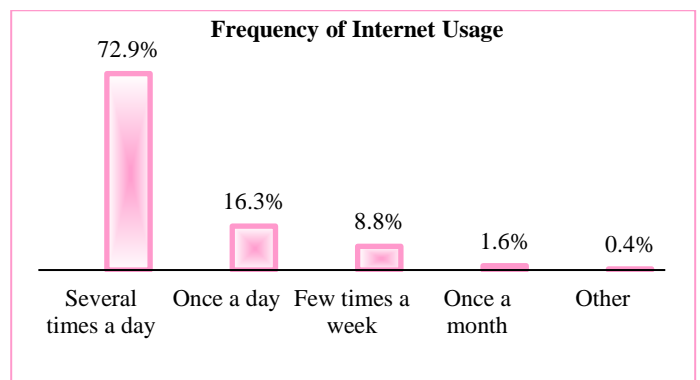


Figure 2 Frequency of Internet Usage

**6.2.2 Time Spent on the Internet**

Regarding the time duration spent on the internet, a maximum of 36.9% respondents spent 1 to 2 hours on the internet on that particular day when they surf. Likewise, 27.1% respondents spent for 2 to 4 hours in a day and 15.6% said that they spent less than an hour on the internet. 12.9% respondents spent between 4 to 6 hours daily while 7.4% respondents dedicated maximum time of above 6 hours per day. The result is displayed in Figure 3.

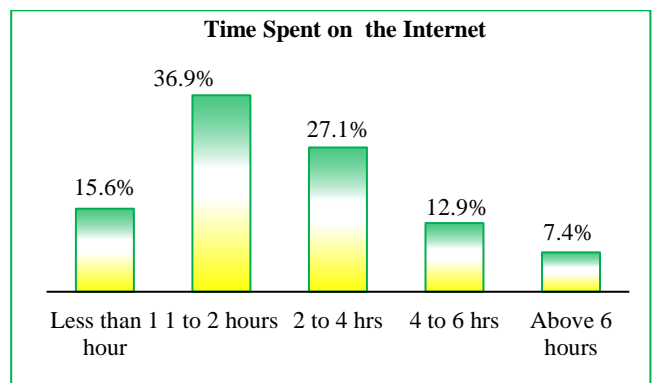


Figure 3 Time Spent on the Internet

**Table 1 Differential Statistics**

Demographic Profile		Frequency	Valid Percent
<b>Sex</b>	Male	239	46.7
	Female	273	53.3
<b>Age Group</b>	15-19 Years	252	49.2
	20-24 Years	260	50.8
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	509	99.4
	Married	3	0.6
<b>Education</b>	Secondary	215	42
	Higher	297	58

### 6.2.3 Purposes of Internet Usage

The majority of 40.1% respondent’s main purpose of using the internet was revealed for social media. It was followed by 34% respondents for entertainment while 23.2% respondents used the internet to get information. Similarly, 1.8% respondents browse the internet for checking e-mail, while 0.8% respondents used for other various purposes besides the choice listed. Figure 4 gives a clear view of the result.

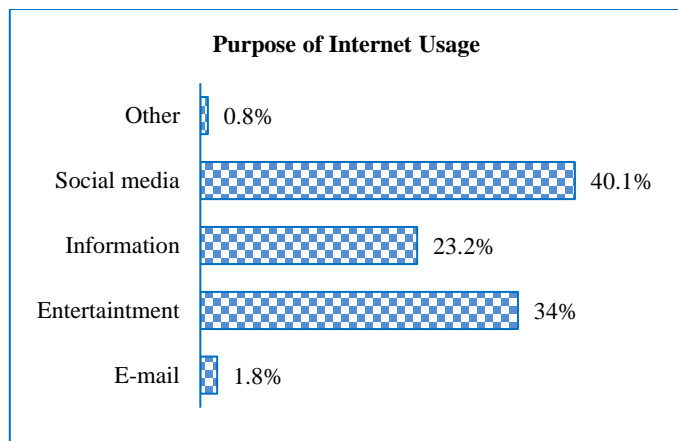


Figure 4 Purpose of Internet Usage

### Segregation Based on Age Group

On the basis of the age group, the frequency of the internet usage, time spent on the internet and purposes of the internet usage were segregated as in Table 4. The result revealed that ages 20-24 years use the internet highly with several times in a day than another age group. Likewise, the highest respondents’ with 44% spent their maximum time of 1 to 2 hours on the internet within the ages of 15-19 years while a maximum number of 35% respondents in another ages 20-24 years spent for 2 to 4 hours on the internet in a day. This shows that high age group of 20-24 years spent more time on the internet than lower age group. Regarding the purpose of the internet usage, the survey revealed that there is a difference in the usage of the internet according to the respondent’s age group. The highest score of 38.7% respondents within ages 15-19 years found entertainment as their major purpose of using the internet while 45.6% from age group 20-24 years mainly focused on using social media. The segregated result is demonstrated in Table 2.

**Table 2 Segregation of Frequency, Time Spent, Purpose of Internet Usage and Age Group**

	15-19 Years	20-24 Years
Several Times a Day	57.4%	87.7%

Frequency of Internet Usage	Once Daily	23.3%	9.6%
	Few Times a Week	15.3%	2.7%
	Once a Month	3.2%	0
	Other	0.8%	0
Time Spent on the Internet	Less than 1 hour	17.5%	13.8%
	1 to 2 hours	44%	30%
	2 to 4 hours	19%	35%
	4 to 6 hours	11.5%	14.2%
	Above 6 hours	7.9%	6.9%
Purpose of Internet usage	E-mail	0.8%	2.8%
	Entertainment	38.7%	29.4%
	Information	24.7%	21.8%
	Social Media	34.6%	45.6%
	Other	1.2%	0.4%

### 6.3 Social Media

#### 6.3.1 Accounts on Social Media

The respondents having a number of accounts on various social media sites were investigated from the survey. The result reflects that Facebook is popular among all other social media sites listed. The huge number i.e. 98.8% respondents had Facebook account followed by YouTube with 84.6% respondents. Likewise, 59.4% respondents had the Instagram account. Twitter with 35.2% account holders stood fourth and the social media with less likely used was LinkedIn with 10.9% respondents. Out of 512 respondents, only 7.4% respondents had accounts in all the five social media sites as shown in Figure 5.

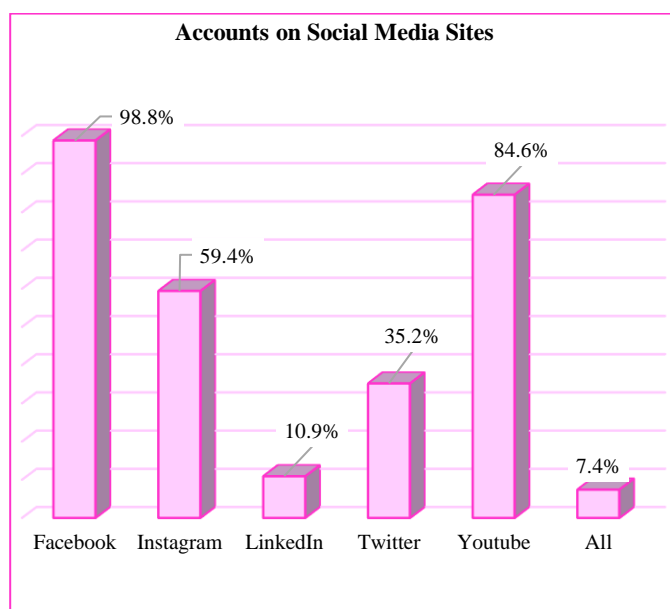


Figure 5 Accounts on Social Media Sites

The users’ coverage proportion on the five popular social media platforms varies by sex, age group, and education as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3 Social Media Accounts and Demographic Profile**

Demographic Profile		Facebook	Instagram	LinkedIn	Twitter	YouTube
Sex	Male	99.2%	64%	14.2%	49.4%	94.1%
	Female	98.5%	55.3%	8.1%	22.7%	76.2%
Age Group	15-19 Years	98.4%	49.6%	3.2%	29.8%	77.0%
	20-24 Years	99.2%	68.8%	18.5%	40.4%	91.9%
Education	Secondary	98.6%	47.4%	2.8%	27%	74%
	Higher	99%	68%	16.8%	41.1%	92.3%

According to the results, the researcher found that male possesses highest number of social accounts on all the social platforms than the female. Likewise, ages 20-24 years dominated the below age group. It indicates that the number of account opening increases as the age group increase on all the social media sites. When drilled education into two groups i.e. secondary education (below grade 12) and higher education (above grade 12) the result seems to be diverse. The result showed that almost equal percentages of social accounts were seen on Facebook from both the education. LinkedIn contained less than 3% accounts from secondary and around 17% from higher education.

**6.3.2 Purpose of Using Social Media Sites**

It is clear from Figure 6 that most of the respondent use social media for social networking. The highest number of respondents covering 34.4% mentioned social networking as their main choice while engaging on social media sites. Nevertheless, entertainment is very close to social network with 32.1%. Following that 27.8%, respondents replied to get information. Only 5.1% respondents chose education as their purpose of using social platforms. Less than 1% respondents’ choice was out of the options provided and was listed under other.

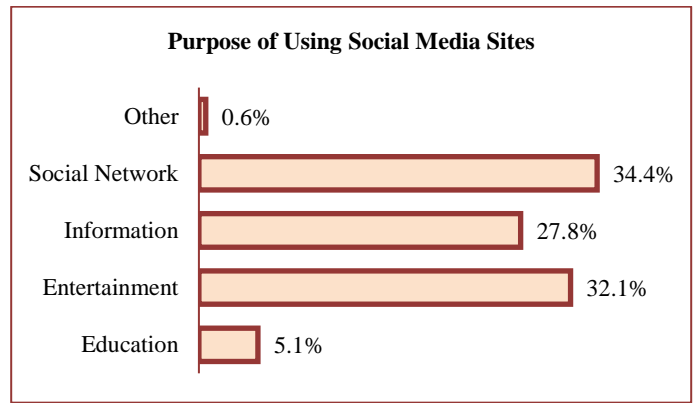


Figure 6 Purpose of Using Social Media Sites

The purpose of social media usage was cross-tabbed with the demographic profile of respondents as shown in Table 4. The table demonstrates that the majority of a male use social media for social networking whereas a female for entertainment. The higher age group 20-24 years was seen interested in social networking while lower age group towards entertainment. The education wise result reflected that a majority of respondents from secondary education’s primary purpose of using social media was for entertainment while higher education respondents used social media mainly for social networking.

**Table 4 Purpose of Social Media Usage and Demographic Profile**

Demographic Profile		Education	Ent.	Information	S. Net	Other
Sex	Male	5.8%	30.4%	23.7%	38.8%	1.3%
	Female	4.5%	33.6%	31.3%	30.6%	0%
Age Group	15-19 Years	6.1%	38.1%	27.9%	27.1%	0.8%
	20-24 Years	4.1%	26%	27.7%	41.7%	0.4%
Education	Secondary	6.6%	39.9%	25.8%	27.2%	0.5%
	Higher	4%	26.1%	29.3%	39.9%	0.7%

Note: Ent.- Entertainment, S.Net -Social Networks

**6.3.3 Frequency of Social Media Usage**

The result of a frequency of social media usage as shown in Table 5 shows that the highest figure with 67.5% respondents from Facebook, 58.2% from YouTube and 47.3%

from Instagram used social media sites several times a day. Twitter was used by 29.3% respondents once a day whereas 38.2% respondents used LinkedIn only a few times a week.

**Table 5 Frequency of Social Media Usage**

Frequency	Facebook	Instagram	LinkedIn	Twitter	YouTube
Several times/day	67.5%	47.3%	5.5%	16.1%	58.2%
Once a day	18.8%	28.2%	20.0%	29.3%	22.6%
Few times/week	10.5%	16.8%	38.2%	26.4%	16.1%
Once/month	2.4%	7.0%	34.5%	24.1%	2.7%
Other	0.8%	0.7%	1.8%	4.0%	0.5%

The frequency of social media usage was cross-tabbed with the age group as shown in Table 6. A majority of respondents in both age groups used Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube several times a day. Maximum respondents of ages 15-19 years used Twitter and LinkedIn once a month while ages 20-24 years used LinkedIn few times a week and Twitter once a day.

**Table 6 Frequency of Social Media Usage and Age Group**

Social Media	Age Group	Time Spent (in hours)				
		Several times/day	Once a day	Few times/week	Once a month	Other
Facebook	15-19 Years	51.6%	24.4%	17.9%	4.5%	1.6%
	20-24 Years	82.6%	13.6%	3.5%	0.4%	0%
	15-19 Years	38.7%	31.5%	18.5%	10.5%	0.8%
Instagram	20-24 Years	53.4%	25.9%	15.5%	4.6%	0.6%
	15-19 Years	12.5%	50%	0%	37.5%	0%
	20-24 Years	4.3%	14.9%	44.7%	34%	2.1%
LinkedIn	15-19 Years	20.5%	23.3%	26%	27.4%	2.7%
	20-24 Years	12.9%	33.7%	26.7%	21.8%	5%
	15-19 Years	49.2%	24.6%	21.4%	4.8%	0%
YouTube	20-24 Years	65.6%	21%	11.6%	0.9%	0.9%

**6.3.4 Time Spent on Social Media Sites**

Table 7 reveals that 42.9% and 35.9% of respondents spent maximum time i.e. 1 to 2 hours on Facebook and YouTube respectively. Rest of the social media sites were used for less than an hour in a day whenever they engage.

**Table 7 Time Spent on Social Media Sites**

	Facebook	Instagram	LinkedIn	Twitter	YouTube
Less than 1 hr	28.6%	69.7%	88.9%	86.4%	27.2%
1 to 2 hours	42.9%	19.9%	9.3%	10.7%	35.9%
2 to 3 hours	13.1%	4.0%	1.9%	1.8%	20.1%
3 to 4 hours	7.7%	3.7%	0%	0%	8.0%
Above 4 hours	7.7%	2.7%	0%	1.2%	8.7%

Likewise, the result was segregated on the basis of age group as shown in Table 8.

**Table 8 Time Spent on Social Media Sites and Age Group**

Social Media	Age Group	Time Spent (in hours)				
		Less than 1	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4	Above 4
Facebook	15-19 Years	31.7%	45.1%	9.8%	4.9%	8.5%
	20-24 Years	25.6%	40.7%	16.3%	10.5%	7%
	15-19 Years	67.5%	20.8%	5%	5%	1.7%
Instagram	20-24 Years	71.2%	19.2%	4%	2.8%	2.8%
	15-19 Years	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
	20-24 Years	91.3%	6.5%	2.2%	0%	0%
LinkedIn	15-19 Years	85.9%	11.3%	1.4%	1.4%	0%
	20-24 Years	86.7%	10.2%	2%	0%	1%
	15-19 Years	34.8%	31.6%	17.6%	8%	8%
YouTube	20-24 Years	20.9%	39.6%	22.2%	8%	9.3%

The majority of respondents from both age groups spent 1 to 2 hours on Facebook while less than an hour was seen on other social media (Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter) except YouTube. Most of the respondents from age group 15-19 years spent less than an hour in YouTube whereas age group of 20-

24 years spent 1 to 2 hours in a day. This shows that higher age group spent more time on YouTube than lower age group.

## VII. DISCUSSION

The present study elicits the role of the internet and social media among the youth of Nepal. Numerous previous studies have concluded that youth are the excessive users of the internet. The present study shows that almost 73% of youth surf the internet several times a day while 16.3% exhibited their presence at least once a day. This shows that youth are highly accessible to the internet usage. A report by International Telecommunications Union also revealed that 94% youth in developed countries and 67% in developing countries use the internet (ITU, 2017). According to ASMA (2016), 46% Indian internet users are school or college going students which forms a large pool of internet.

Facebook is the leading global social platform with 2.07 billion monthly active users and youth are the prominent users. Just 18-24 years holds 30% of total Facebook users (Facebook, 2018). This is supported by the present study as well, as 98.8% respondents have Facebook accounts followed by 84.6% on YouTube. The similar result was followed from Rai and Moktan, (2014) study where 92% respondents had a Facebook account and Center for Media Research-Nepal (2014) study where 92% of the Journalists were found on Facebook.

In all social media platforms, the presence of male is seen higher than female. This contradicts the finding of Chan-Meetoo and Rathacharan (2011) as they found young women of ages 19-24 years were highly active compared to ages 25 to 29 years in terms of volume and activity. The difference could be the comparison of ages above 24 years in their studies and below 19 years in the present study.

More than one-third respondents reported that they use social media for social networking or engaging. Nwazor and Godwin-Maduikwe (2015); Ali, Iqbal, and Iqbal (2016) also concluded that most students use social media for networking. The present result is followed by 32.1% for entertainment and 27.8% for information. Aydin (2016) and Khan (2012) found entertainment was the student's primary choice on social media platforms. In contrary to the above results, Rai and Moktan (2014) showed that social media users mainly use for information (27%), followed by 22% for socialization and 11% for entertainment. The huge variation could be due to the age and status of the users. The targeted samples in the present study were students and ages below 24 years against the samples in Rai and Moktan who were class II

and II government officers of Nepal whose age would be above 24 years.

The majority of Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram users use social platforms multiple times a day. LinkedIn has a minimum frequency of use. On average, the student spent less than an hour on other social media except for Facebook and YouTube where they spent between 1 to 2 hours daily. Our results are in line with the report by Statista (2017) which stated that daily social media usage of global internet users counted to 135 minutes per day.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

As the transformation of social media is openly observed in the rest of the world, Nepal is no exception. A new form of social media has been embraced and it has almost rooted in the Nepali culture of communications and networking in a short span of time. The present study concluded that youth are highly addicted towards the internet and social media usage. Usually, youth browse the internet for social media followed by entertainment and information. Almost all had a Facebook account which shows it's popular among youth like in other many countries of the world. The frequency of social media usage was determined as several times in a day thereby spending an average of two hours daily mainly for social networking. The presence of a male user is seen higher than female in all the five social media platforms. Moreover, youth of ages 15-19 years are fond of using social media for entertaining while ages 20-24 years utilized in social networking.

Social media offers people a great convenience for networking and communications. It delivers a lot of benefits and risks on the other side as well. Users should be careful while using social media as it may lead to addiction. Therefore, use of social media in a controlled manner can influence to contribute remarkable rewards in the society. Since, the role of today's youth is significant in determining country's future economic, political, cultural and social well-being, handling the social media in the proper way would foster the lifestyle of a human being.

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