

# Nepal Social Media Users Survey

2021



# Nepal Social Media Users Survey 2021

## Summary of the Findings

### THE SURVEY

An online survey was conducted in November 2021. A total of 403 completed responses were found valid and analyzed for this report.

The survey is the slightly modified version of the Nepal Social media Users surveys conducted by the Center for Media Research – Nepal (CMR-Nepal) in 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019.

### I. DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Out of 403 respondents, 13.15 per cent identified themselves as female, and the remaining identified themselves as males.

Most of the social media users nearly one fourth (24 per cent) are between the age group 31 to 35 years whereas those between 36 to 40 years made of 19 per cent of the social media users.

Sixteen per cent of respondents are between 26 to 30 years old; and 15 per cent are of 21 to 25 years old Altogether, those between 21 to 40 years made up three-fourth of the social media users.

**Table 1: Age-wise distribution of Nepali social media users**

Age Group	Social media users (%)
Less than 16 years	0.2
16 to 20 years old	4.5
21 to 25 years old	15.1
26 to 30 years old	15.9
31 to 35 years old	24.3
36 to 40 years old	18.9
41 to 45 years old	13.7
46 to 50 years old	5.2
50 years old or more	2.2

Source: Nepal Social Media Users Survey 2021

## LOCATIONS

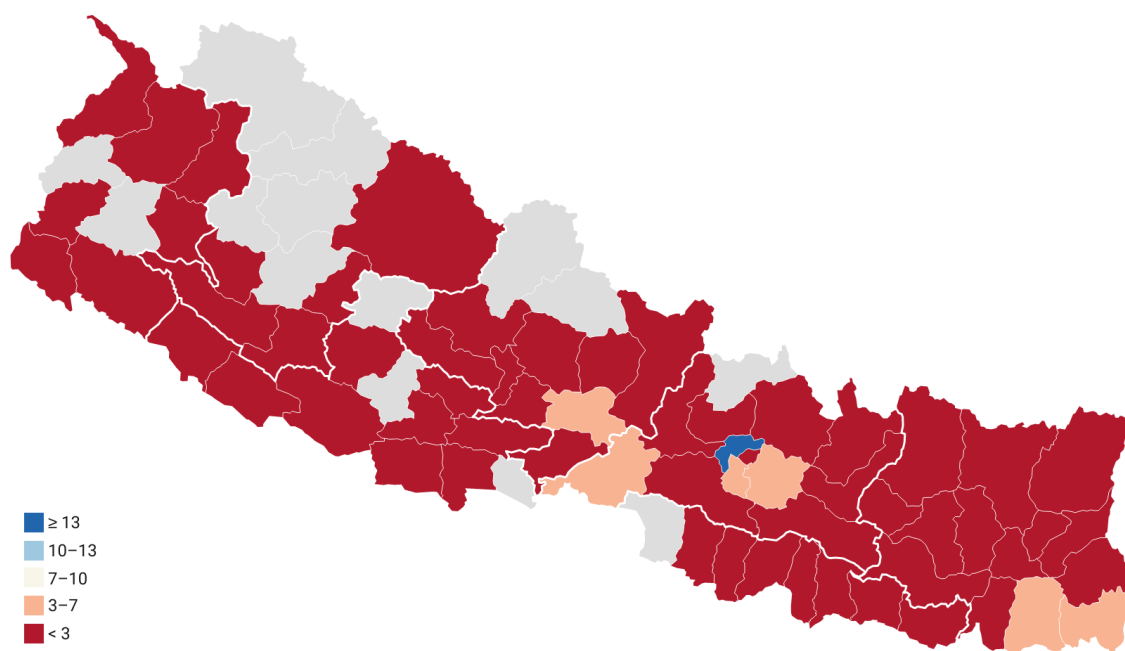
Based on their home districts, the respondents represent 63 among 77 districts of Nepal. Most of them represent Kathmandu district (16 per cent) with nearly one-fourth of the users representing three districts of the Kathmandu Valley. After Kathmandu, the largest group of social media users came from Morang (6.5%).

Users from Lalitpur (5.2%), Chitwan (4.4%), Jhapa (4.2%), Kavrepalanchok (4%), Tanahun (3.4%), Bhaktapur (3.2%), Sunsari (2.7%), Nuwakot (2.5%), Sarlai (2.2%), Makawanpur (2.2%), Gorkha (2%) and Dhading (2.2) have significant presence in social media.

Those districts having between 1.5 to 1.9 per cent of users are Syangja, Sindhupalchok, Palpa, Kaski, Kailali, Gulmi, Dolakha, Banke, Surkhet and Arghakhanchi.

Between 1 to 1.25 per cent of respondents of the survey came from Sindhuli, Lamjung, Baglung, Terhathum, Rupandehi, Parbat, Nawalparasi (Eastern), Khotang, Dhanusa, Dadeldhura and Bardiya.

**Figure 1: Distribution of social media users of Nepal**



Source: Nepal Social Media Users Survey 2021

As shown in heat-map (Figure 1), Nepal's Social media users mostly represent central and eastern parts are more in Terai and hilly regions than in Himalayan region.

The districts in western Nepal have less social media users than the eastern Nepal and southern plains have more users than northern mountains.

But the current location of Nepali social media users gives a different picture. About 20 per cent of the social media users live outside Nepal. Of those, 7.2 per cent Nepali social media users live in South Asian countries followed by Rest of Asia and North America (3.2% each), Gulf countries and Europe (2.2% each), Australia (1.2%) and Africa (0.2%).

Among those living in Nepal, a big number of them (61.5 per cent) currently live in three districts of the Kathmandu Valley. Pokhara and Biratnagar is a current city of significant number of social media users (2.7%) followed by Dharan and Chitwan (1.2%).

## OCCUPATIONS

Majority of Nepali social media users are journalists, lawyers and teachers who are considered to be opinion makers of the society as they make up more than one-fourth of the respondents followed by professionals such as doctors and engineers, either full-time employed or freelancing, as they make up nearly one-fifth of the users followed by students (16.1%).

Businessperson or self-employed make 10.6 per cent and privately employed make 10.1 per cent. Around five per cent of users are those employed in I/NGOs and civil service.

**Table 2: Occupation of Nepali Social media Users**

Occupation / status	Users (%)
Journalist / lawyer / teacher	26.3
Professional (eg doctor / engineer)	19.3
Student	16.1
Businessperson or self-employed	10.6
Employed in private sector	10.1
INGO / NGO / advocacy group employee	5.7
Government employee	4.9
Farmer	2.2
Retired or unemployed	1.2
Activist / social worker	0.7
Politician / political cadre / political group	0.7
House husband / housewife	0.7

Source: Nepal Social Media Users Survey 2021

## II. FINDINGS

### *Nepali and English are most popular languages on social media*

Most of Nepali social media users (73.4%) use both Nepali and English in the social media platforms. Nearly 15 per cent use only Nepali language whereas 10.6 per cent use only English language. Remaining 1.5 per cents users said they use social media in other languages, which include Nepal Bhasa, Islamic and Japanese.

### *Facebook and Twitter are most popular social media platforms*

Among the respondents, 93.5 per cent have account on Facebook whereas 91 per cent have Twitter account. Instagram was third popular social media platform among Nepalis with 78.9 per cent having an account on it, and 70.4 per cent have account on YouTube. Those having account on LinkedIn were 54.7 per cent and 49.5 percent have account on TikTok.

### *Nepalis use multiple and anonymous accounts*

Two in five social media users maintains multiple accounts in at least one of the social media platforms. Among those using multiple accounts in same social media platform, approximately 53 per cent also manage the social media of their office or community or group whereas around 38 per cent of them use all accounts for private use. Around 17 per cent maintain anonymous account too – that is nearly 7 per cent of total Nepali Social media users.

### *Mobile phones are most used device to access social media*

Mobile phone is the most used device to access social media with 97 per cent using mobile phones. For 25.5 per cent of them, mobile phone is the only device that they use to access social media, whereas others also use other devices along with mobile to access social media. Nearly three-fourth, 73 per cent, also access social media from desktop or laptop computer and around 14.5 per cent also use tablet to access social media. Two per cent use only desktop or laptop computers to access social media.

### *Two in 5 users spent 3-6 hours daily on social media*

More than 2 in 5 users spend between one and two hours on social media everyday whereas 39 per cent spend between three to six hours daily. About 5.7 per cent use it less than one hour a day whereas 13.1 per cent said they are on social media for more than six hours a day. Almost 2 in 5 users use social media outside office hours, during morning and/or evening and/or night whereas 3.7 per cent only use social media during office hours.

### III. FINDINGS ON SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

#### *Social issues are the most posted topic on social media*

More than two-third of the respondents post about social issues on social media whereas 29.6 per cent say they post anything they find okay to post.

Many users, 26.9 per cent, also post political issues and those posting interesting things is almost one-fourth. Then it is followed by issues related to own's profession (23.9%), sports (19.2%), entertainment (18.4%), issues of own community (16.4%), media (16.2 per cent), and economy (12.4%).

A few numbers post about science and technology, and environment. Other topics mentioned include philosophy, art, literature and books, gender and feminism, movies, management and sanitation. Some users are lurker; they use the platform only to read others' posts.

**Table 3: Topics of Social Media Posts**

Topic	Users (%)
Social issues	34.8
Anything I find ok	29.6
Everything	27.9
Political issues	26.9
Interesting topics	24.9
Issues related to my profession	23.9
Sports	19.2
Entertainment	18.4
Related to my community	16.4
Media	16.2
Economy	12.4

Source: Nepal Social Media Users Survey 2021

#### *Spending leisure time and receiving information is top reasons for using social media*

Spending leisure time; and receiving information and news are the top two reasons for using social media for Nepali users. More than 92% of users use social media for those two reasons.

90.5 per cent of Nepalis use social media to network with friends, while 87.9 per cent use social media to express their feelings and opinions.

Nearly similar number of people, 87.1 per cent. use to understand public opinions.

Almost 87 per cent use social media for interesting gossips, and 81 per cent use it for professional works. More than 78 per cent said that they use it to ask questions.

**Table 4: Reasons for Using Social Media**

Reason for using social media	Users (%)
To spend leisure time	92.9
For information and news	92.8
For networking with friends	90.5
To express feelings and opinion	87.9
To understand public opinion	87.1
For interesting gossips	86.9
For professional work	81.0
To ask questions	78.3

Source: Nepal Social Media Users Survey 2021

## IV. OPINIONS ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA

The respondents were given a number of statements and asked whether they agree or disagree to it.

### ***SOCIAL MEDIA AS MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION***

Majority of social media users (83.1%) believe that social media is a strong medium of communication. Only 7.7 per cent of users believe that social media is not a strong medium of communication whereas nearly six per cent remained neutral on it.

### ***SOCIAL MEDIA AS SOCIAL / POLITICAL CHANGE CATALYST***

Majority of Nepali users (68.5 per cent) believe that social media can bring social and political changes. Only 12.1 per cent of users do not believe that social media can bring social or political changes whereas 16 per cent are neutral.

### ***SOCIAL MEDIA AS REPRESENTATION OF PUBLIC OPINIONS***

Majority of social media users (51.3%) believe that the platforms represent public opinion. 29 per cent of users believe that social media is not representative of public opinions whereas 15.4 per cent are neutral on it.

## ***SOCIAL MEDIA'S IMPACT IN NEPALI SOCIETY***

A huge majority of users (88.3%) believe that the impact of social media is growing in Nepali society whereas 3 per cent say its impact is not growing. 4.5 per cent are neutral.

## ***POLITICIANS AND CELEBRITIES ON SOCIAL MEDIA***

Majority of social media users, more than 70 per cent, believe that more politicians and celebrities should join social media. Only 8.4 per cent of social media users think it is not necessary whereas 17.4 per cent are neutral on it.

## ***WILL SOCIAL MEDIA BE USELESS IN NEAR FUTURE?***

Around 7.5 per cent of users opine that social media will become obsolete in a few years. One-quarter have no idea if the platform is going to be obsolete in near future. Sixty-three per cent of them disagree that social media will be obsolete in a few years.

## ***MANY USE SOCIAL MEDIA IN WRONG WAY***

More than 65.5 per cent of Nepali social media users think many users are using social media in wrong ways. Nearly 13.7 per cent users believe social media is not being used in wrong ways in Nepal. A little more than 17 per cent users hold no opinion on it.

## ***SOCIAL MEDIA IS SERIOUS***

Majority of users (62.8%) do not believe that social media is not just fun. Only 16.4 per cent of users believe that social media is just for fun. 17.4 per cent are neutral on it.



## V. DISINFORMATION ONLINE

A part of the survey dealt with disinformation online.

### How concerned are you with misinformation online?

Majority of Nepali social media users (86.8%) said they are concerned about the fake news, misinformation, and disinformation online. Only five per cent said they are not concerned while 6.5 per cent were neutral.

### Have you seen misinformation online at least once last week?

Most of the respondents, 91.8 per cent of them, have seen misinformation online in last seven days whereas 7.5 per cent did not see any misinformation last week online. Less than one per cent of the respondents chose not to answer the question.

Facebook is the platform where most Nepali users see misinformation as 79.8 per cent of respondents who saw misinformation said they saw it on the social networking site. 23.3 per cent those saw misinformation only on Facebook and not on other platforms.

YouTube, the video streaming site, was the platform where 48.1 per cent saw misinformation, whereas 36.3 per cent saw misinformation on Twitter and 30.3 per cent saw it on websites.

Nearly 9 per cent couldn't remember in which platform they saw misinformation. And although there was choice of TikTok, some respondents mentioned the platform. Many of the users saw misinformation in multiple platforms as only 25.8 per cent of those who have seen misinformation named only one platform.

**Table 5: Misinformation online**

Where have you seen Misinformation last week?	Users (%)
On Facebook	79.8
On YouTube	48.1
On Twitter	36.3
On other websites	30.3
Can't remember where	8.8
Haven't seen it	7.5

Source: Nepal Social Media Users Survey 2021

### Is/will misinformation be a problem for our society and politics?

More than two-third (75.9%) social media users in Nepal believe that misinformation is already a problem to our society and politics.

A little more than 12 per cent think it will create problem in future and further nine per cent think it may already have been a problem. In total, 97.8 per cent of Nepal’s social media users think misinformation is or will be a problem to our politics and society.

Only a very few, 0.2 per cent, believe it not a problem now. Rest either did not reply the question or blamed weak journalism or commercial interest of mainstream media for misinformation.

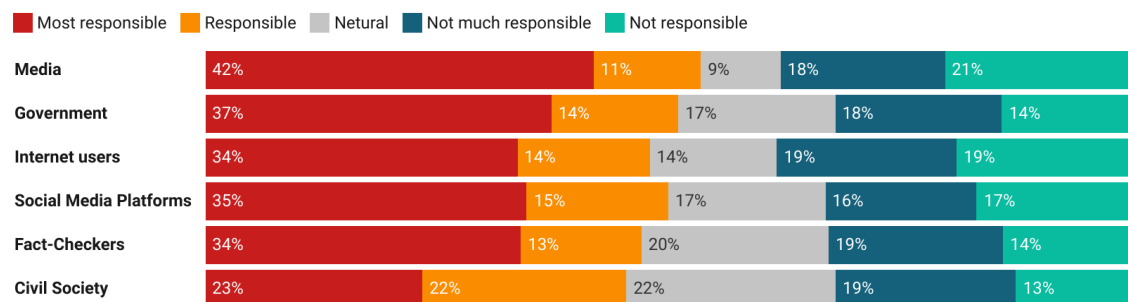
### Who are responsible for tackling misinformation?

Most social media users put media as the most responsible agency to tackle misinformation online. About 49 per cent of all respondents put media on most responsible side whereas the 47 per cent put government on most responsible side.

About 44 per cent considered users as responsible, and equal number of respondents considered social media platforms as responsible. 42.1 per cent of the respondents believe fact-checkers are responsible to tackle misinformation online.

Those considering civil society as responsible to tackle misinformation online were 40 per cent. Some, about 14.4 per cent, considered there are other agencies most responsible and listed Press Council of Nepal, academic institutions, police, parents, business organizations and political parties as other stakeholders.

**Figure 2: Who are responsible to tackle misinformation?**



Source: Nepal Social Media Users Survey 2021

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## THANK YOU NOTE

Center for Media Research – Nepal and the researcher are greatly indebted to all the participants of the survey, including those who could not complete it. Also, all social media users who shared/retweeted the link to survey form inviting others to fill the form deserve big thank you. The survey would have been impossible without the support from all of them.

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## ABOUT CMR-NEPAL

Center for Media Research – Nepal (CMR Nepal) is an autonomous, research and policy-oriented, nonprofit non-governmental evolving policy think tank with focus on enhancing the knowledge content of policy making and media development by conducting researches aimed at informing Nepal's policymakers and media stakeholders.

CMR-Nepal strongly believes in liberal democracy, human rights, and media's role in strengthening democracy.

It conducts studies and researches on various aspects of media; develop, design, manage and conduct skill development trainings, workshops and seminars for journalists; publish training manuals, policy reviews, and research reports; and work to uplift journalism standards and practices.

CMR-Nepal's initiatives includes NepalFactCheck.org – a fact-checking collaboration, and Nepal: Media Policy Hub ([www.mediapolicy.org.np](http://www.mediapolicy.org.np)) and Nepal: Civil Space Hub ([www.NepalPolicy.org](http://www.NepalPolicy.org)).

Based in Kathmandu, Nepal, CMR-Nepal can be reached at [cmrnepal@butmedia.org](mailto:cmrnepal@butmedia.org) or <http://research.butmedia.org>

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