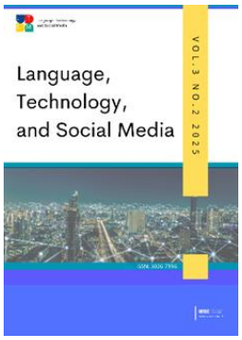

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Research Article

Effect of Social Media Language on Students' Intention to Engage in Academic Use Behavior at Leading Universities in Nepal

Gunja Kumari Sah, Sajeeb Kumar Shrestha and Bhoj Raj Aryal*

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Abstract

Social media plays a central role in students' daily academic activities across the globe. This study investigates how social media language influences students' intention to engage in academic use behavior at leading universities in Nepal. Grounded in the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), a structured questionnaire was distributed to 235 students from Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu University, Purbanchal University, and Pokhara University using stratified sampling. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to analyze the data. Results reveal that performance expectancy significantly influences both behavioral intention and actual use behavior. Effort expectancy and social influence significantly affect use behavior but not behavioral intention, while facilitating conditions show no significant influence on either. Behavioral intention mediates the relationship between UTAUT constructs and use behavior. The findings highlight the importance of social media language in shaping students' academic engagement, offering practical insights for educators, policymakers, and platform developers to enhance social media's educational utility.

Keywords: Academic Use Behaviour, Behavioral Intention, Nepalese leading universities, Social media language, UTAUT Model

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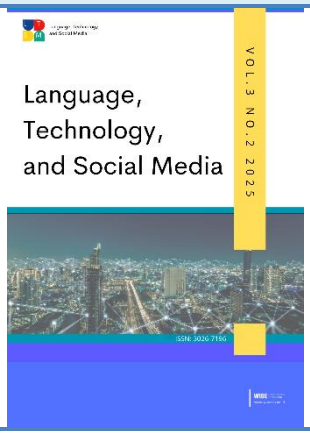

INTRODUCTION

Social media has been popular among the student body in the modern period, and technology is gradually permeating every person's daily existence in contemporary society [1], [2]. It has become an integral part of the lives of many individuals. Social media networks have an impact on society in the modern era. Many students can learn from each other without meeting the physical person. They always meet on a social media platform, learning things in easy language [3], [4]. Since the advent of the Internet, students have been using social media networking sites to look up information about universities and study programs and to read reviews left by alumni who have attended a particular university [5]. Students can improve their learning process and gain several academic advantages from the internet and social media.

Social media platforms, such as Instagram, Messenger, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, and others, can have an impact on university students' behavior and academic achievement [2], [6], [7]. Social networking sites allow people to communicate and share resources through various social media languages and are regarded as additional communication digital networks [7], [8]. Social networks incorporate characteristics that can improve the learning environment, motivate teachers and students to engage more, and improve academic performance through social media languages [9], [10]. Although social media is widely recognized for improving institutional outreach and user engagement, its application is still uneven. Effective utilization is hampered by several issues, including poor strategic planning, inadequate training, low user involvement, and facilitating conditions [11].

Social media has developed into a tool for facilitating social interaction and spreading educational content. Furthermore, relationships formed and maintained through social media sites have grown in popularity over the past decade. These social media sites allow users to make personal profiles, communicate with people online, upload pictures, post, edit statuses, and send private or public messages through socially accepted, informal language commonly used on social media platforms [12]. Social networks are regarded as additional channels of communication that facilitate resource sharing and communication. So, a learning environment improves by motivating instructors and students to engage more on social networking sites for easy language for academic achievement [11].

In every sector of Nepal, social media use has been rising gradually [13], [14]. There are 2,911,284 Internet users in Nepal for several purposes. Approximately 43.5% of Nepal's population, or 13.50 million individuals, accessed social media in January 2024. Since social media was introduced, people's ways of interacting and communicating have evolved. Many people use it frequently for learning purposes, especially the younger generation [15], [16]. The majority of younger people who use social media are students. Social media's ascent is responsible for the change that students and their peers produce and distribute material on the Internet [16]. Social media's broad availability, user-friendly features, and adaptability are reasons for its widespread popularity. Social media's ease of use has improved human existence by making it easier to create and share knowledge, but it also raises questions about possible drawbacks. The impact of social media on the academic performance of Nepalese university students demonstrates the contradiction between its advantages and disadvantages [13], [15]. Thus, this study has a good impact on academic achievement and produces encouraging results.

Therefore, it has become essential for students to utilize social media as a means to enhance their academic performance. Previous research has shown that platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, and others offer considerable advantages as learning tools. In this context, the present study aims to examine the relationship between students' behavioral intention and their actual use of social media for academic purposes. To achieve this, the study focuses on four leading universities in Nepal Tribhuvan University (TU), Kathmandu University (KU), Purbanchal University (PU), and Pokhara University (PoKU) to assess the influence of social media language on students' academic use behavior.

This study focuses on identifying the characteristics of university students' behavioral intention to use social media, framed within the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). The UTAUT model, developed and validated by Venkatesh et al., includes four core determinants of behavioral intention and use behavior: Performance Expectancy (PE), Effort Expectancy (EE), Social Influence (SI), and Facilitating Conditions (FC) [17]. Numerous studies have applied models such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) [18], [19], UTAUT [20], [21], and the extended UTAUT2 [22], [23] in higher education contexts to examine students' social media usage and academic engagement. These studies generally support the successful implementation and explanatory power of the UTAUT model.

METHODS

Research Design

The study work was based on a quantitative approach and descriptive research design. The study design made it possible to analyze thoroughly how students behaved when using academic language in particular social media environments using by UTAUT model.

Based on the UTAUT, the following hypotheses were proposed to examine the research objectives:

H1: Performance Expectancy (PE) positively influences students' behavioral intention to use social media for academic purposes.

H2: Performance Expectancy (PE) positively influences students' actual use behavior.

H3: Effort Expectancy (EE) positively influences students' behavioral intention to use social media.

H4: Effort Expectancy (EE) positively influences students' use behavior.

H5: Social Influence (SI) positively influences students' behavioral intention to use social media.

H6: Social Influence (SI) positively influences students' use behavior.

H7: Facilitating Conditions (FC) positively influence students' behavioral intention to use social media.

H8: Facilitating Conditions (FC) positively influence students' use behavior.

H9: Behavioral intention positively influences students' actual use behavior.

Research Framework

This study was guided by the above Hypotheses based on the UTAUT model, which offered a lens through which to view behavioral intention and use behavior. Therefore, the research framework of the study is based on the UTAUT model shown in Figure 1.

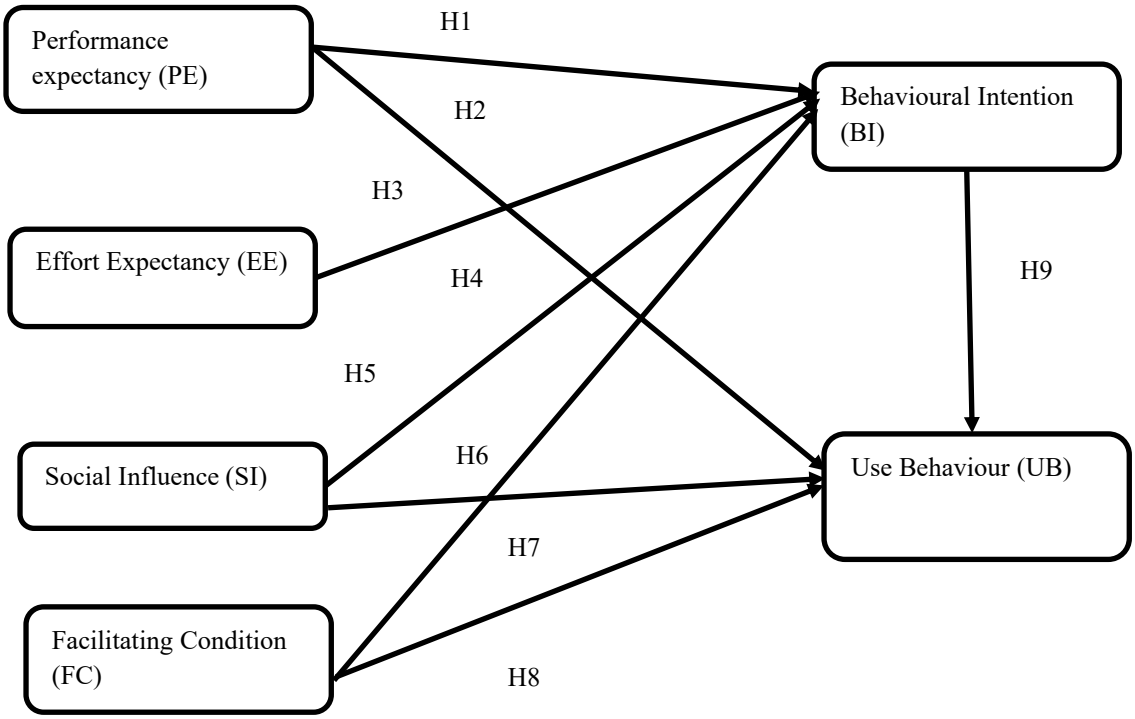

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework [17]

Figure 1 explains that performance, effort expectancy, social media influence, and facilitating conditions are independent constructs as the main determinants for the intention mediating construct and use behavior as a dependent construct.

Population and Sample

The study's population consisted of students from Nepal's leading universities. Samples were taken from four major Nepalese universities by the stratified sampling techniques. The strata were chosen by a systematic random sampling process based on the proportion of students from TU, PU, PokU, and KU, among other prestigious universities.

Research Instrument

Information from the 235 students of several universities was obtained by a structured questionnaire arranged on a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 representing strongly disagree and 7 representing strongly agree.

Data Collection Procedure

Students in some constituent campuses of several provinces were approached and asked to fill out structured questionnaires to accumulate facts about social media through online and physical distribution.

Data Analytics on X

Information was supplied to SPSS and AMOS software for analysis. The components of the UTAUT model were extracted by exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The goal of the exploratory factor analysis is to get at the factor solutions that were theoretically anticipated. Kaiser-Meyer-

Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's tests were employed to assess the collected sample's adequacy. Next, an analysis by structural equation modeling was used to identify the construct items' discriminant and convergent validity. All the transported pieces of information were systematically analyzed, and outcomes were presented by several measurement models, structural models, tables, and figures. A statistical method for evaluating and estimating intricate interactions between variables, such as direct and indirect effects, is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). It is appropriate to examine the interactions between several latent and observable variables, particularly when evaluating theoretical models like UTAUT.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Analysis and Results

Data were analyzed by frequency of demographic status, cross-tab analysis, measurement, structural equation modeling, and hypothesis testing.

Sample Status

The sample of demographic status revealed that 51.5% were male and 48.5% were female respondents. The respondents' age stands out at 6% from the age group of 16 to 20, 72.3% from 21 to 25, 13.2% from the age group of 26 to 30, 5% from 31 to 35, and 3.5% from above 35 years old. This study focuses on the university students' use of social media in a provincial area, which takes up 51.9% of Bagmati, 15.7% of Lumbini, 13.2% of Madhesh, 10.6% of Koshi, 6.4% of Gandaki, and 2.1% of Karnali. In academic circumstances, the results revealed that 46% of respondents who participated were undergraduates, while 50.6% of master's, 1.3% were MPhil, and 2.1% were PhD. The student's university stands out at 61.7% of Tribhuvan University, 17% of Pokhara University, 11.1% of Purbanchal University, and 10.2% of Kathmandu University.

Regarding familiarity with social media, 48.5% of social media users have excellent knowledge, 26.8% have good knowledge, 22.1% have average, and 2.6% of respondents stated that they have poor knowledge. Additionally, according to the report, 73.2% of social media users use a smartphone, 21.3% use a laptop, and 5.5% use both. The research explained that 81% of the respondents were highly interested and 73% had positive attitudes towards social media.

Cross-Tab Analysis between Students of Universities and Social Media Sites

Cross-tabulation is a quantitative research technique that examines the relationship between two or more variables.

Table 1. Cross-Tab Analysis between Several Universities and Social Media Usage

Universities	Facebook	Gmail	Viber	WhatsApp	Youtube	Others	Total
TU	27	22	41	23	22	10	145
KU	7	3	4	4	4	2	24
PU	4	5	2	2	11	2	26
PoKU	22	5	2	2	6	3	40
Total	60	35	49	31	43	17	235

Pearson Chi-square value 42.033, P = 0.000

The majority of students of Tribhuvan University use social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Gmail, and Viber. Facebook is also widely used by students at Kathmandu and Pokhara universities. But Purbanchal University students are the ones who use YouTube the most. Therefore, the Pearson Chi-square value of 42.0.33, shown below the significance level of 0.000 (1%), was 0.000 for several university and social media usage services. An exploratory factor analysis was first carried out before measurement to acquire the theoretically expected factor answers. The measurement model was used to assess the validity and reliability of the data, and the research also examined the connections that the structural model had projected in the second step.

Measurement Model

The measurement model primarily depends upon exploratory factor analysis. The primary goal of exploratory factor analysis is to arrive at factor solutions that are theoretically expected. The sampling appropriateness, or whether or not the replies provided with the sample are sufficient, is measured by the KMO. The outcomes of the KMO and Bartlett's tests are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's tests

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.844
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3018.660
	Df	190
	Sig.	0.000

Table 2 demonstrates that the KMO value of 0.844 was greater than 0.70, and the significance value was 0.000, less than 0.050. According to Kaiser (1974), a KMO value of 0.5 is considered the least (hardly accepted), values between 0.7 and 0.8 are acceptable, values greater than 0.80 are excellent, and values greater than 0.9 are exceptional. The significance value must be less than 0.5 for a factor analysis to proceed. The rotated component matrix, a key outcome of principal components analysis, is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Rotated Component Matrix

Component	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
PE1	0.814					
PE2	0.818					
PE3	0.801					
EE1		0.810				
EE2		0.793				
EE3		0.688				
SI3			0.773			
SI4			0.842			
SI5			0.826			
FC1				0.748		
FC2				0.888		

Component	1	2	3	4	5	6
FC3				0.873		
BI1					0.848	
BI2					0.864	
BI3					0.839	
UB1						0.792
UB2						0.778
UB3						0.773
UB4						0.693
UB5						0.682

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Table 3 illustrates that factor loading values above 0.50 were appropriate for additional examination. The items were divided into six key components, and each component's factor loading was assessed for each item. Two PE4 and PE5 items from the performance expectancy construct, two EE3 and EE4 items from effort expectancy, two SI1 and SI2 items from social influence, two FC1 and FC2 items from facility condition, and another BI4 and BI5 items from behavioral intention to use were eliminated to increase reliability and validity. These items were removed to meet the minimum loading criterion. The statistics for Goodness of Fit are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. Goodness of Fit Statistics

Final Measurement Model	Fit indices							
	CMIN/DF	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	Sig.
Standard Fit [25], [26], [27], [28]	<3	>0.80	>0.80	>0.80	>0.90	>0.90	<1	<0.05
Final model fit	2.460	0.867	0.820	0.878	0.905	0.923	0.079	0.000

Table 4 shows the measurement model fit assessment; all estimates were within the standard fit, indicating a good fit of the model. Thus, it shows that the measurement model has fit indices for structural equation modeling research.

Table 5. Standard Factor Loading, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity

Constructs	Items	SFL	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	PE	EE	SI	FC	BI	UB
PE	PE1	0.701	.859	0.672	0.454	0.882	0.820					
	PE2	0.880										

Constructs	Items	SFL	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	PE	EE	SI	FC	BI	UB
	PE3	0.869										
EE	EE1	0.733	0.767	0.523	0.286	0.767	0.103	0.723				
	EE2	0.727										
	EE3	0.709										
SI	SI3	0.752	0.822	0.607	0.286	0.824	0.056	0.535	0.779			
	SI4	0.797										
	SI5	0.787										
FC	FC1	0.668	0.848	0.654	0.232	0.878	0.096	0.482	0.417	0.809		
	FC2	0.889										
	FC3	0.852										
BI	BI1	0.831	0.898	0.747	0.643	0.905	0.524	0.215	0.207	0.101	0.864	
	BI2	0.905										
	BI3	0.855										
UB	UB1	0.872	0.914	0.683	0.643	0.930	0.674	0.116	0.210	0.121	0.802	0.827
	UB2	0.845										
	UB3	0.632										
	UB4	0.860										
	UB5	0.896										

Table 5 displays the factor loadings between constructs. This shows that the Average Variance Extracted meets the reliability criterion. The value of the AVE must be greater than 0.5 [26], [27], [28], [29]. Furthermore, each item's significance, or the p-values for the observed variable, is 0.000, demonstrating the convergent validity of the items. Additionally, based on the Fornell–Lacker (FL) criterion, the construct's square root of the AVE was greater than the inner correlations. The off-diagonal entries in Table 5 indicate the correlations between the variables. According to all diagonal values (the square root of AVE) are more significant than values in off-diagonal cells. As a result, the model meets all of the criteria for discriminant validity. The measurement model path diagram of the research is shown in Figure 2.

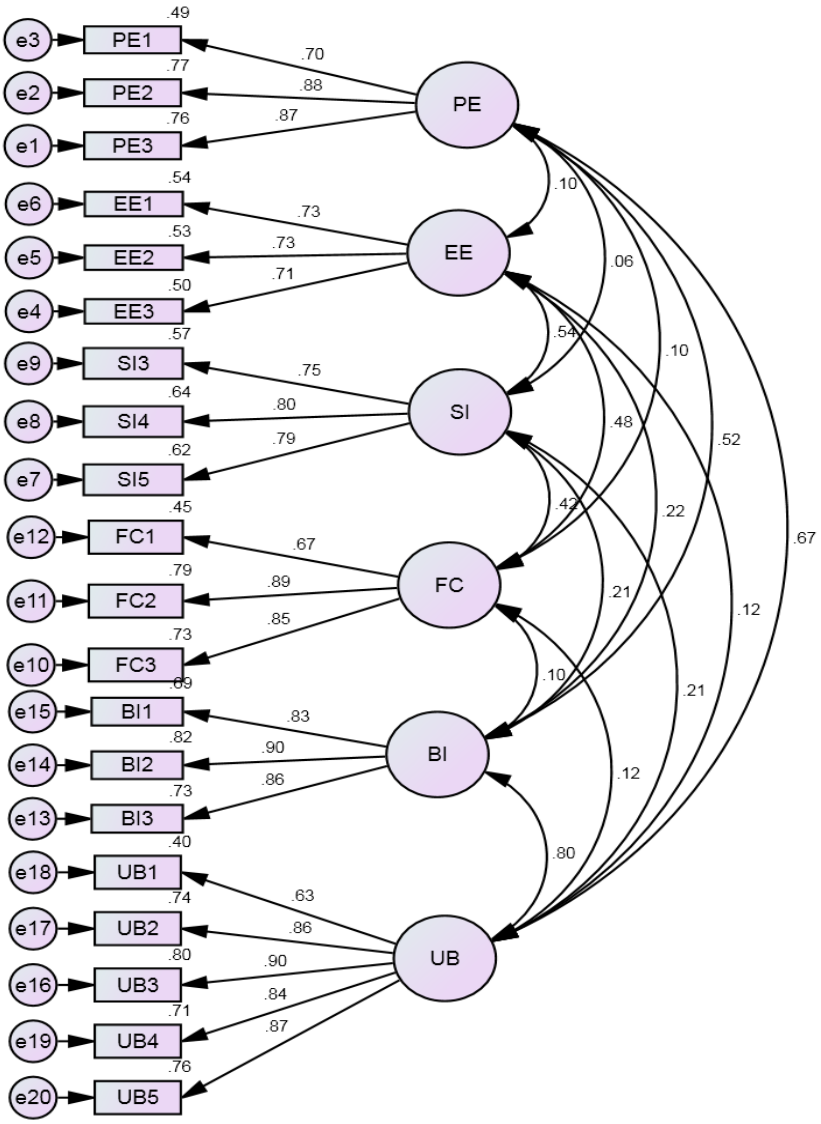

Figure 2. The Measurement Model

Figure 2 displays a path diagram for the final enhanced measurement model. Additionally, Figure 2 shows that the standardized factor loadings for all indicators range from 0.632 to 0.905, exceeding the threshold of 0.500.

Structural Equation Model

The structural model illustrates the study framework's potential directions. Performance, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, behavioral intention, and use behavior are all used to assess the structural model. According to the UTAUT, the independent variable is highly represented when predicting the mediating and dependent variables. Table 6 displays the results of the hypotheses.

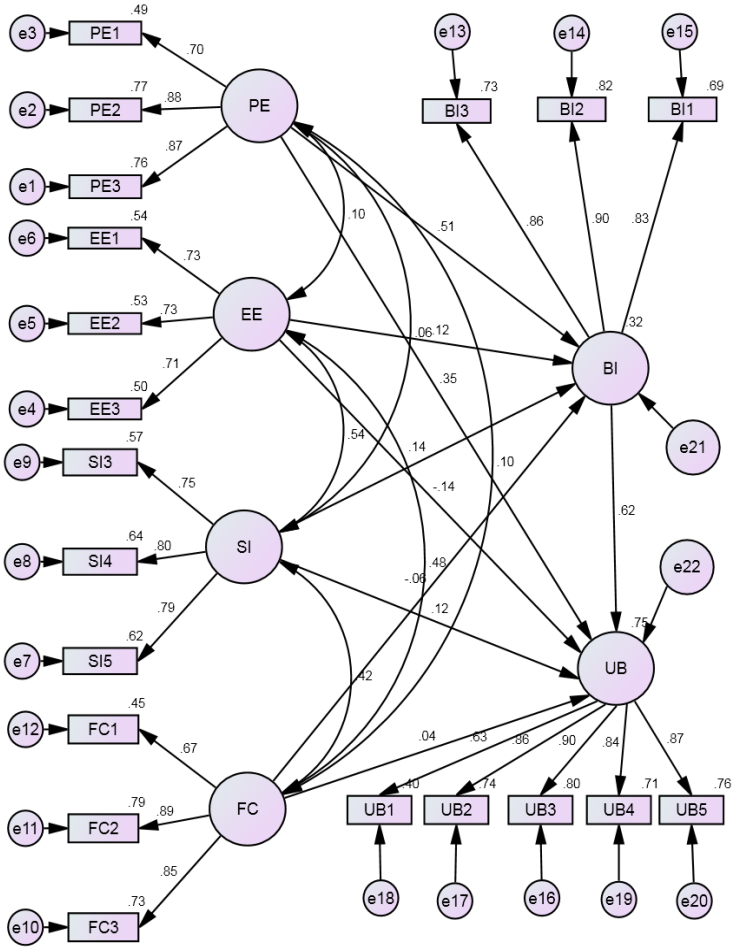

Figure 3. The Structural Model

Hypothesis Testing of Independent, Mediating, and Dependent Constructs

Table 6 shows each of the nine hypotheses of the research can be tested through path coefficients (β) and corresponding p-values. The results show that performance expectancy (PE) is a highly influential and significant factor on (β = 0.626; p<0.05) behavioural intention and (β = 0.428; p<0.05) use behavior. Thus, H1 and H2 were significantly associated. However, facility condition has the least influence and insignificant factor on (β = -0.053; p>0.05) behavioural intention and (β = 0.034; p > 0.05) use behavior. So, H7 and H8 were not associated. In circumstances of effort expectancy insignificant association (β = 0.131; p>0.05) behavioural intention but a significant association (β = -0.150; p<0.05) with use behavior. Similarly, social influence insignificant association (β = 0.119; p>0.101) with behavioural intention but a significant association (β = 0.097; p<0.05) with use behavior. Similarly, the mediating construct highly influences and significantly associates with use behaviour (β = 0.097; p<0.05).

Table 6. Standardized Regression for Hypotheses Testing

Description			Hypotheses	Estimate	P	Label
PE	--->	BI	H1	0.626	***	Associated
PE	--->	UB	H2	0.428	***	Associated
EE	--->	BI	H3	0.131	0.214	Not Associated
EE	--->	UB	H4	-0.150	0.040	Associated
SI	--->	BI	H5	0.119	0.101	Not Associated

Description			Hypotheses	Estimate	P	Label
SI	--->	UB	H6	0.097	0.049	Associated
FC	--->	BI	H7	-0.053	0.417	Not Associated
FC	--->	UB	H8	0.034	0.449	Not Associated
BI	--->	UB	H9	0.608	***	Associated

Discussion

The various facets of social media's role in the four major Nepalese universities' students' education have been clarified by this thorough analysis. The findings indicate that behavioral intention and use behavior are significantly influenced by performance expectancy and insignificantly affected by facility condition. Similar findings are of performance expectancy reported by several authors [8], [20]. They stated that performance and effort expectancy have a significant and favorable association with behavioural intention towards social sites for teaching and learning among students of university education. Sharing information on social media platforms entails disseminating digital content, including links, images, videos, and more [30]. However, according to Alvi's 2021 report, facility condition had no discernible impact, suggesting that students did not view the technological, organizational, and other relevant resources available to enable the use of social networking platforms as being extremely vital. Additionally eLearning platforms and social media sites, indicating that utilization of digital platforms will help students do better academically [23], [31].

The study indicates that effort expectancy is significant with use behavior and insignificant with behavioural intention to use. The related findings stated a positive but insignificant influence of behavioural intention to use on social media use behaviour among university students [31]. Similarly, social influence had a substantial association with use behavior but an insignificant association with behavioral intention. This result indicates that students think their parents, peers', or university instructors' opinions can affect how they use social media [8]. Students are expected to use social media platforms for academic purposes if they think that significant others will support them [20], [23]. The importance of practices is clear in both public and academic debate when digital and social media communications are contrasted with more conventional media [11], [32].

Likewise, the mediating construct has a strong influence and a substantial correlation with use behavior. This indicates a behavioral intention to genuinely direct and utilize the usage of social media or any other digital platform for their academic endeavors [9], [23], [31]. Therefore, it is expected that when students feel that significant others will support them, they will use social media for academic goals.

Therefore, the research from several nations, shows that social media is becoming increasingly acknowledged as an essential tool for academic performance. Both library professionals and patrons agree that libraries are helpful for marketing services and encouraging communication, yet there is still a significant gap in user satisfaction and effective implementation [11]. Social media is essential for socializing people, studying courses, improving skills, interacting with others, and socializing. Despite certain shortcomings, negative experiences like melancholy, addiction, lack of self-esteem, physical dangers, cyberbullying, and unaffordability also reduce social media use behaviour.

CONCLUSION

People use technology in several ways throughout their lives, from using the many social networking sites with friends to learning, working, or spending time with their families. It is difficult to identify a single aspect of life that has not altered. Over time, people have come to

take daily tasks that have been digitally altered for granted [16], [33]. The study presents several significant conclusions that will benefit students, faculty, legislators, and higher education administration. The significance of effort expectancy, educational institutions should exercise caution when deciding which social media platform to use for their program or course. The wrong choice of a complex platform or a poorly designed website can divert students' attention from their studies. For any social media education program to be successful, the right technology infrastructure is a prerequisite. Therefore, this study would like to suggest that the leading universities maintain Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Viber, Messenger, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, and others, can have an impact on university students' use behavior and academic achievement. The infrastructure needed to sustain a social media platform for successful academic achievement should be a top priority for all universities. Any disruption brought on by a sluggish computer or a bad internet connection on the part of the teachers could make learning more difficult. Therefore, government organizations should take the lead in supplying broadband that is specifically intended for educational institutions to achieve a favorable aim for the adoption of social media technology.

The study reveals that the performance expectations of higher education students are significant. Educational institutions should make sure that the courses they offer on social media platforms help students develop special skills that will help them land jobs. It shouldn't just be a degree that the student adds to their list of qualifications. Students' desire to embrace social media technologies for learning would be positively impacted since it would reinforce their notion that finishing these courses will improve their chances of landing a job. The results have implications for politicians, academics, and social media users. University policymakers should improve enabling aspects, including technological infrastructure and network quality, and conditions. Teachers are encouraged to be aware of students' perceptions to enhance social media platforms for interesting work, information, and creativity. They are more likely to accept and utilize it in their academic lives when students perceive social media as useful, interesting, and enjoyable. Future studies could focus on the elements that made certain applications more popular than others on social media, and a better understanding could open the door to talks about supporting the needs of students at universities.

LIMITATIONS

Although this study offers valuable insights into the relationship between social media language and students' academic behavior using the UTAUT model, it is limited by its exclusive focus on students from four universities in Nepal, without incorporating perspectives from faculty or administrative staff. Additionally, the reliance on a single theoretical framework restricts broader exploration of alternative models. Future research is encouraged to include multiple stakeholder perspectives and to consider applying alternative models such as TAM or UTAUT2 to gain a more comprehensive understanding of academic social media use.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

G.K.S performed the research approach, designed the structured questionnaire, collected data, analyzed the data, and wrote the manuscript. B.R.A and S.K.S conceived, edited, and finalized the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

DECLARATION OF USE OF AI IN SCIENTIFIC WRITING

The authors used ChatGPT during the preparation of this work to improve grammar. After utilizing the tool, the authors thoroughly reviewed and edited the content as necessary and assumed full responsibility for the publication's content.

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