

# FNJ Social Media Survey Report 2012



# **FNJ Social Media Survey Report 2012**

## **Executive Summary**

In April/May 2012, the Federation of Nepali Journalists surveyed its members on the adoption, use, and perception of importance of social media in their professional work. The survey included open-response items, Likert-type items, and demographic categories. Usable responses were received from 1119 members (representing about 14% of FNJ membership) from 71 out of 75 districts. Results are summarised in this report.

### *Key findings:*

1. FNJ members use social media not only for communication but also for generating and making their news stories better through research and information verification by using social media.
2. Members from the age group of 20-29 years of age embraced social media and used it most extensively for professional as well as personal advancement. This group has been using the social media for the longest duration of the time and utilises the platforms better.
3. The majority perceive social media to be one of the best ways to reach their audience as well as their colleagues.
4. While majority use social networking sites such as Facebook, they do not use blogs, tools like Twitter to promote their stories and hold discussions.
5. The respondents who have been using social media for various lengths of time would still like to improve capacity to make a greater online impact.

## **Background**

With the increase in accessibility and availability of the internet, use of social media is on the rise in Nepal. This has enlarged the professional and personal spheres of individuals. However, this has also created a divide where individuals with internet skills and access can utilise the web-based devices and services to enhance their presence in the cyberspace and use it to their personal advancement and professional growth. Though this divide is slowly getting narrowed; the internet penetration rate is only 16.67% in Nepal, according to April 2012 data of the Nepal Telecommunications Authority.

This small internet user base and still even smaller number of content producers does not necessarily diminish the reach and importance of the role and use of the internet in Nepal. By its nature, the reach of the internet is not limited by geographical boundaries and language barriers. Content generated anywhere in the world is instantly available all over the world.

Rapidly evolving online technologies are providing newer and user-friendly platforms, tools, and services that aid in communication and networking. Along with the prevalence of e-mail, the internet is also becoming the resource and platform for fulfilling the various social roles for individuals such as social and professional networking. While e-mail is usually limited to communicating to individuals or groups based on a membership, other social media such as blogs, social networking websites such as Facebook, professional networking websites such as LinkedIn, and other websites can have a wide following and reach anywhere with internet access. Internet is also extensively used for seeking and imparting information.<sup>1</sup>

## **Context**

The rise in accessibility and use of the internet in Nepal presents opportunities for media sector with its enormous consequence in social, political, and economic role in society. It has broadened the reach of the media to not only Nepalis with access to the internet but also global audience including the Nepali diaspora which seeks news and stories about their society and home. The instant-anywhere nature of internet also poses challenges to journalists with the need for accuracy and reliability as the focus is on speed, which needs to be balanced with completeness and accuracy, essential elements for credibility.

The internet can be a platform and medium to gather news tips and content for stories as well as maintaining news sources. It can also be a platform to promote stories and opportunity to make stories better through research and verification of information. It also makes collaboration and communication easier through sharing of links and through discussions groups.

The internet, and online news publishing and distribution in particular, has also changed the way journalists communicate with their readers. Communication is now both ways, with opportunities for interaction, to answer readers' concerns and comments. Hence, tailoring the news and stories to the internet audience is essential, which seeks specific and brief overview of evolving stories as well as nuanced analysis of developments in society.

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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed survey of use of social media by journalists worldwide, see *Journalist and Social Media: 2011 National Survey on Nepali Journalists*, Center for Media Research – Nepal, 2012 (June)

It is in this context, this survey was undertaken to measure the use and familiarity of social media by Nepali journalists and to understand their needs as social media plays ever larger role in how news is produced and distributed to an internet audience. The survey also seeks to understand the adoption of social media and perception of its utility value in their professional sphere. This study also underscores the opportunities and challenges in the issues of skills in the use of social media.

### **Research Process**

The survey was administered online, with e-mail and telephone follow-ups to the members prompting them to participate in the survey, which reflects the use and ease of comfort in using internet by the members. Therefore, the respondents represent FNJ members who are already familiar with the internet.

The survey was administered through SurveyMonkey, a web-based polling and survey service. The survey was open to all the members from 16 April, 2012 and closed 15 May 2012. This (online) method of survey administration presented a challenge to the respondents with the need to be familiar with the survey design and proficient in use of the computers and with access to the internet, which can be gauged by the number of total as well as incomplete responses.

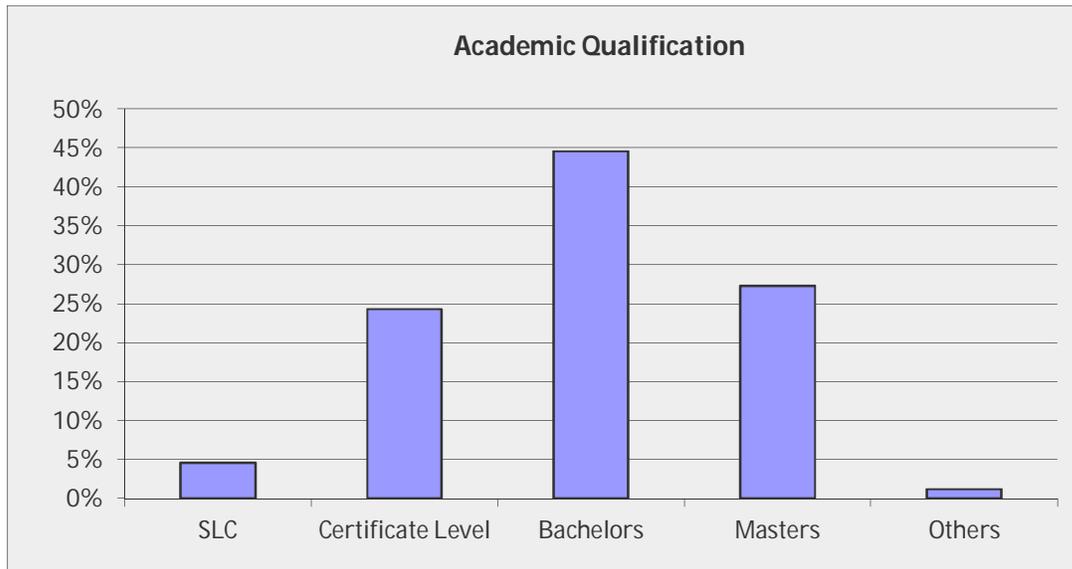
For the purposes of this report, the operational definition of the terms internet and social media can be synonymous and encompass the range of platforms and services, and has been used interchangeably. Also, social networks are taken to denote online platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn among others.

### **Findings**

#### ***Respondents***

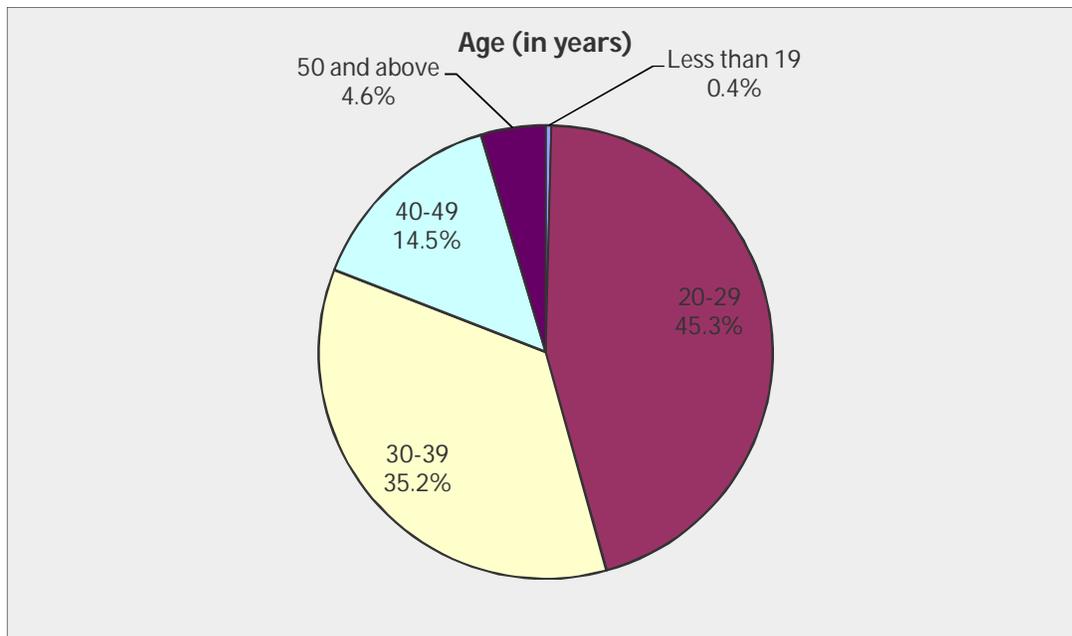
At the end of the survey period, a total of 1119 respondents had taken part in the survey. Out of the respondents, 1079 (96.4%) had completed the questionnaire and/or provided meaningfully valid responses. The total number of respondents represents about 14% of the FNJ membership, with 11.7% females and 88.3% males, which correspond to the male-female ratio of membership base of the FNJ.

More than a quarter of the respondents have a master's degree and less than a quarter have a certificate level of education. About 45% of the respondents have a bachelor's degree.



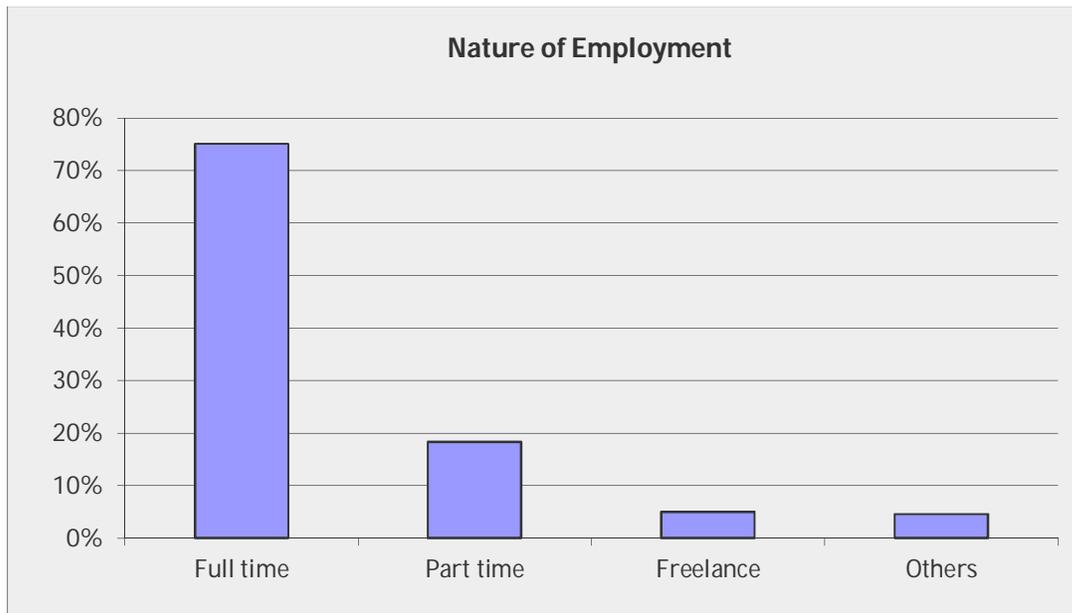
The respondents are from 71 districts. The districts with no respondents were Baitadi, Kanchanpur, Manang, and Salyan. About 1% of the respondents are from about half of the districts in the survey, which is about the same as the number of the respondents from Kathmandu Valley.

The respondents are predominantly young with significant number of senior journalists. The largest group of respondents are from the age group of 20-29 years (45.3%); followed by 30-39 years (35.2%) about 4.6% of the respondents were above 50 years of age.

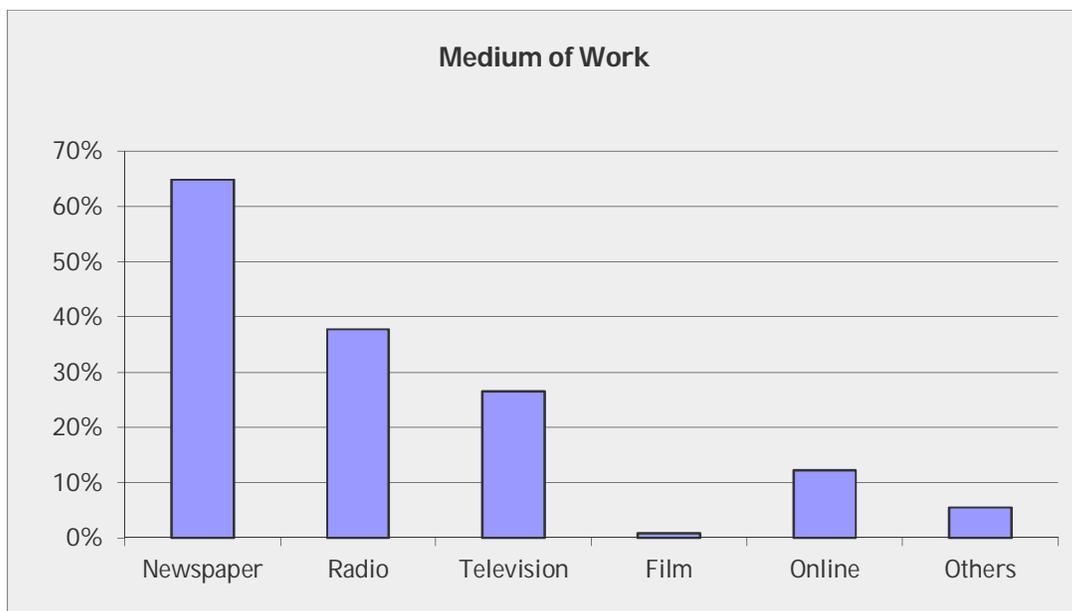


The average working experience of the respondents at 10.5 years; about 50% of the respondents have more than 10 years of experience. Some of the respondents have more than 40 years of experience.

Most of the respondents work full time and predominantly in print journalism. Three-fourths of the respondents work full time and rest work part time and as freelancers.

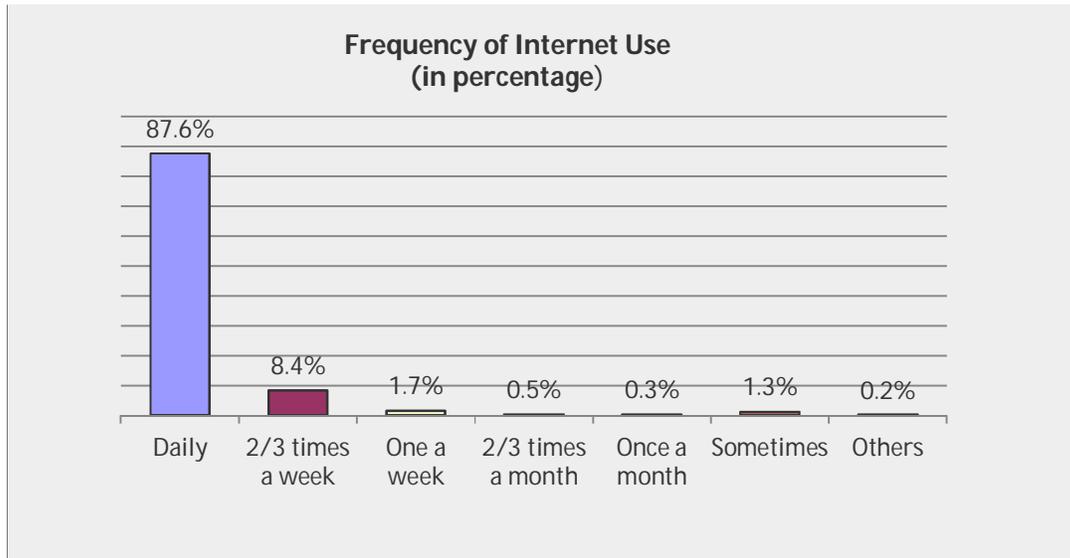


About 64.5% of the respondents work in the print media and 37.8% in radio. Slightly more than one-fourth of the respondents work on television. About 12.2% work for online media. Only about 2% of the respondents are involved in all forms of media; however, significantly, more than 90% of these are from outside the Kathmandu Valley.

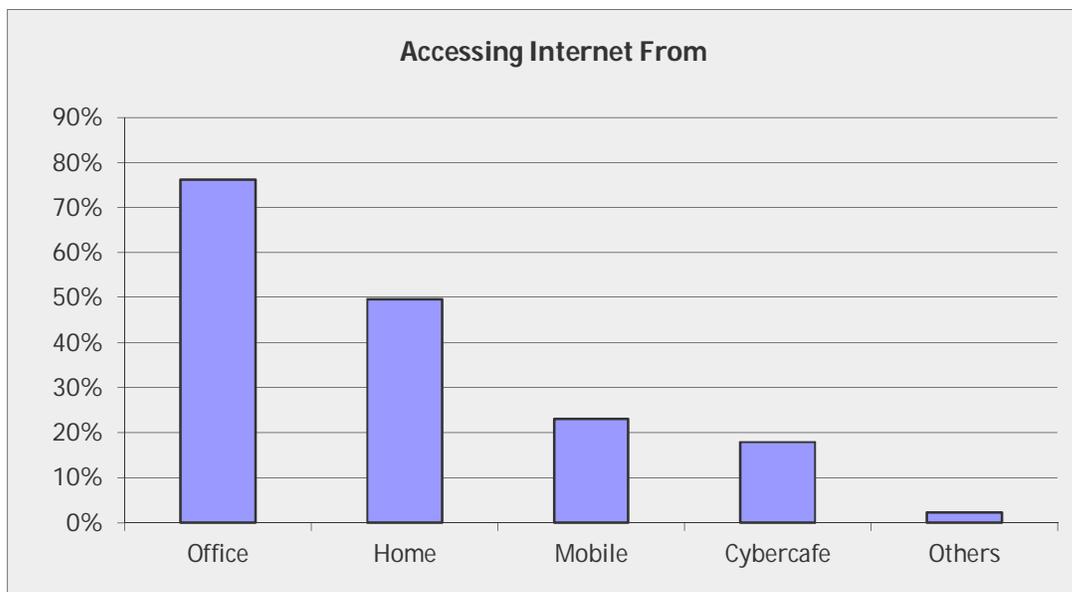


**Internet usage**

Most of the respondents access the internet daily, primarily from their offices with an average of 4.32 hours per day spent online. Out of the total respondents, 87.6% access the internet daily. Of those respondents who access the internet daily, 80.5% do so from offices, and about 51.3% of the respondents also access the net from their homes and 12.6% from mobile devices.

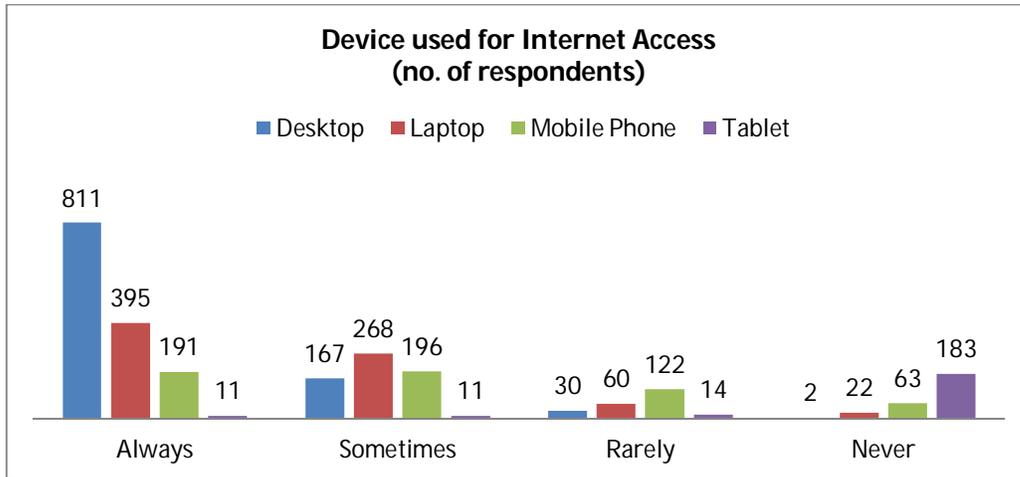


About 16% of the respondents use cybercafés to access the internet daily, representing a population without personal means to access the internet, and reflects their eagerness but also the necessity to access the internet on a daily basis.



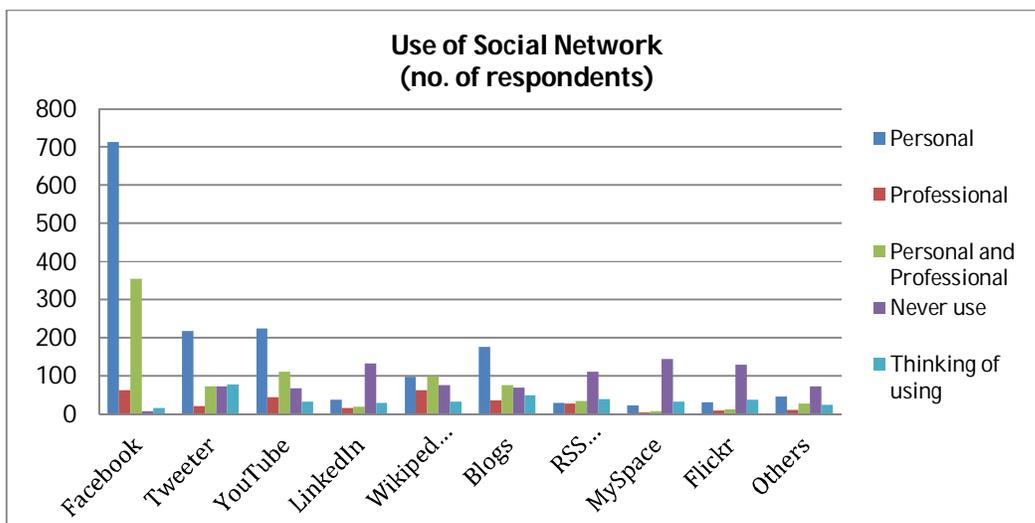
Of all the respondents, 76.2% of the respondents use internet from their offices. About 49.7% access the internet from their homes, with 23.1% accessing the net from their mobile devices.

Most of the respondents always use a desktop to access the internet, and about half use a laptop and one-third use mobile devices to access the internet. More than one-third of the respondents sometimes use laptop and mobile devices to access the internet.



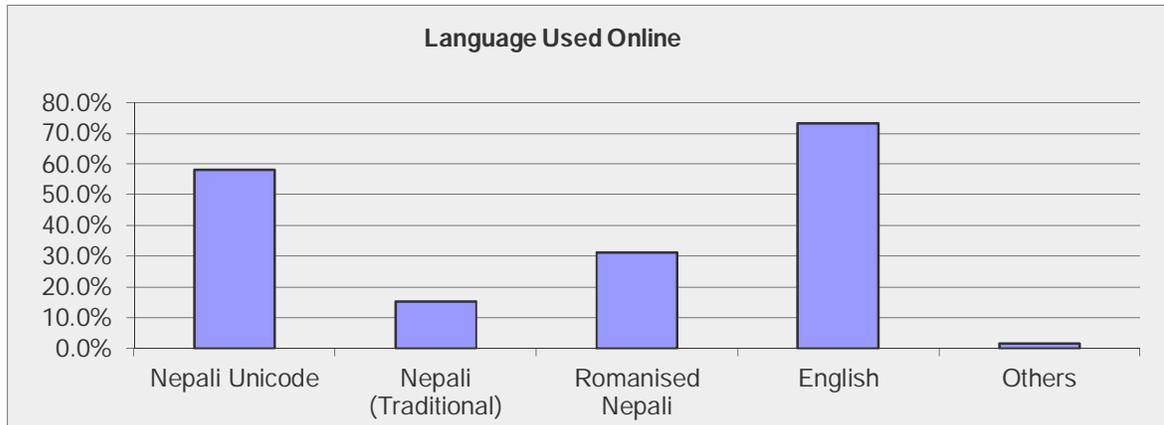
**Social media**

Almost all the respondents are familiar with various social networks and use them mostly for personal purposes. About 69.9% of the respondents use Facebook for personal use and half of them use it for both personal and professional purposes while 6% of the respondents use it exclusively for professional purposes. About half of the respondents use Twitter and YouTube for personal use and around 20% do not use them at all. About 40% of the respondents use LinkedIn for professional networking. Slightly more than 28% of the respondents use Wikipedia both for personal and professional purposes. There is a trend towards online presence with 46.8% of the respondents with their personal blogs and with 9.4% using blogs for professional purposes. However, there is significant gap with about one-fifth not using blogs at all. While 47.2% do not use RSS feeds, about 11.5% use it for professional use.



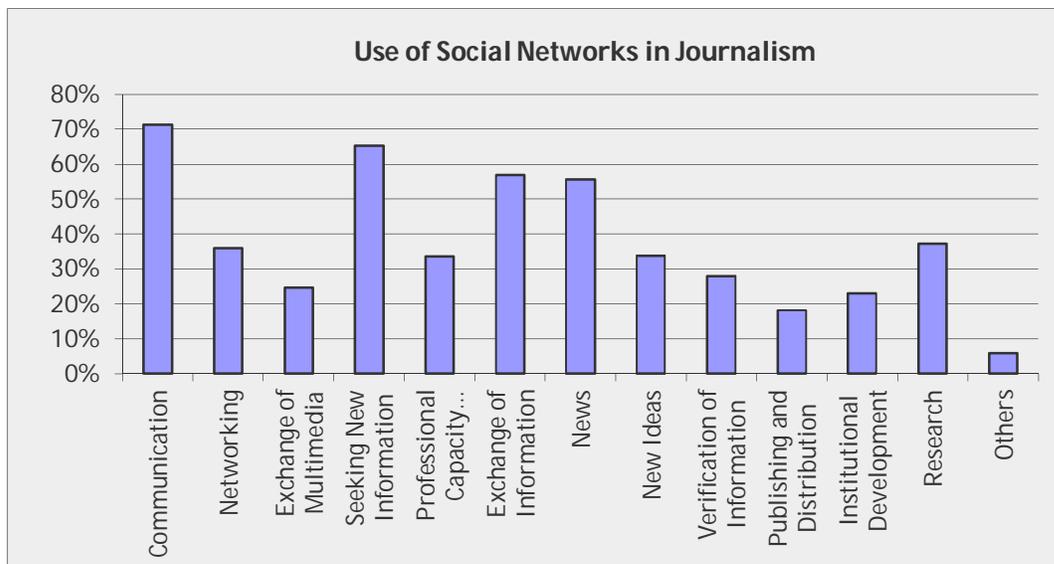
### **Language for social media**

The respondents use English and a mixture of Nepali fonts and Romanised Nepali online. About 73.2% of the respondents use English online. Nepali is used in three forms online; 58% of the respondents use Nepali Unicode and 15.3% use traditional Nepali fonts to communicate online. Interestingly, almost one-third of the respondents use Romanised Nepali.



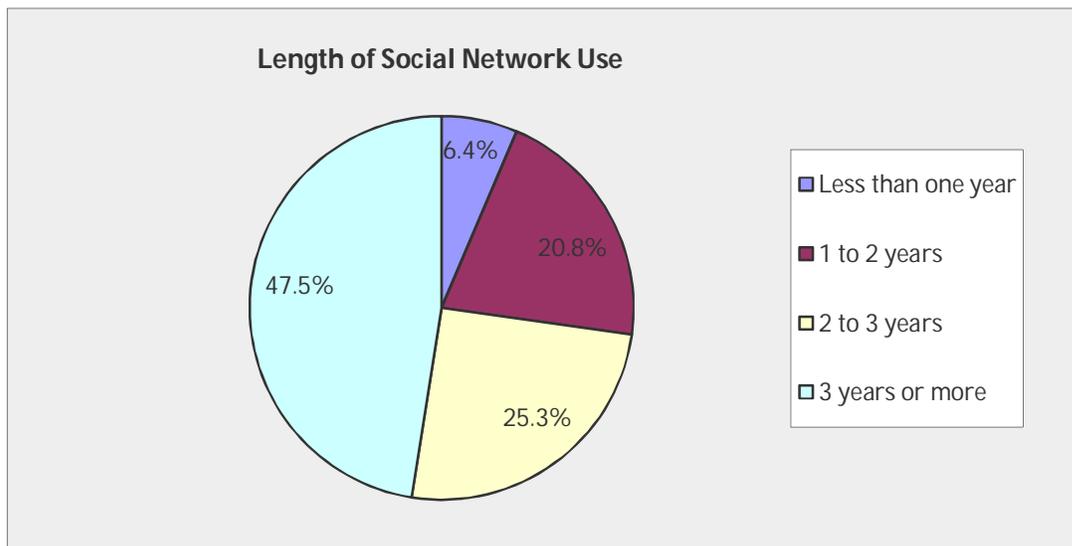
### **Use of social media**

More than two-thirds of the respondents use social networks for their professional work to communicate and seek and exchange information. About 71.2% of the respondents use social networks to communicate and 65.2% to seek new information. A little more than 55% of the respondents use it for exchanging and gathering information. About 37% of the respondents use it for research and similar number it for networking. More than one-third of the respondents use social networks for new ideas and professional development. Social networks have become a significant source of information, with 27.9% of the respondents using it to verify information received, and more than 18.1% use social media to publish and distribute contents online.



### ***Duration of social media use***

Majority of the respondents who have been using the social networks the longest are utilising social media to their best professional use. About 47.5% of the respondents have been using social networks for more than three years for various purposes; three-fourth of them use it for communication; 69.8% to seek new information. Slightly more than 60% use social networks for information exchange and to seek information about news, and 32.7% use it to verify information about stories. More than 43% of the respondents use social networks for professional networking and development and research, with about 21.11% using social networks to publish and distribute content online. And 27% use social media for institutional development. Interestingly, this group is from the ages 20-29 years and 81.6% are full-time journalists with at least a bachelor's degree.

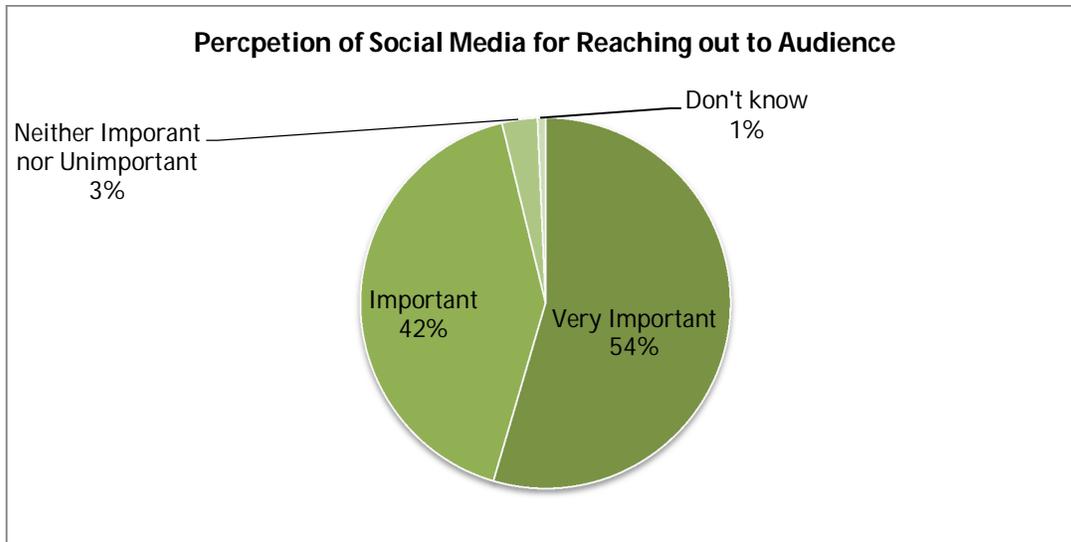


One-fourth of the respondents have been using social media for two to three years. Of these respondents, 73.1% use it for communication and 31.4% for networking. About 63.9% use social media to seek new information and 59.3% to exchange information. 50.5% use it for news sources and 29.8% use it to seek new ideas. At the same time, 24.9% use it to verify information.

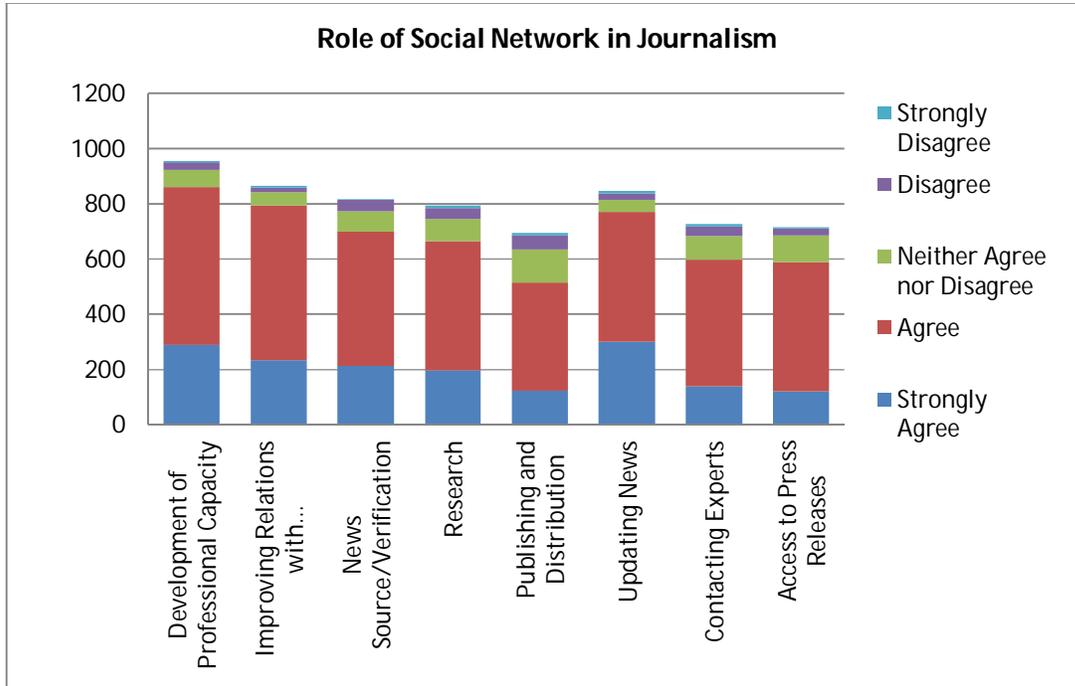
Those respondents who are recent users of social media utilise it the least. About 20.8% of the respondents have been using social networks for one to two years. While their use of social media for communication, networking, and professional purposes is just below longer-time users, only about 25.2% of these respondents use social media for their professional development.

### ***Importance and reach of social media***

Of the total respondents, 45.4% of the respondents try to be online whenever possible. This attempt to stay online is also reflected by the importance attached by the respondents to the role of social media in reaching the target audience and for professional needs and development, with 54.6% of the respondents perceiving social media as being very important to reach their viewers, readers, and online listeners while 41.7% accept its importance to reach their target audience.



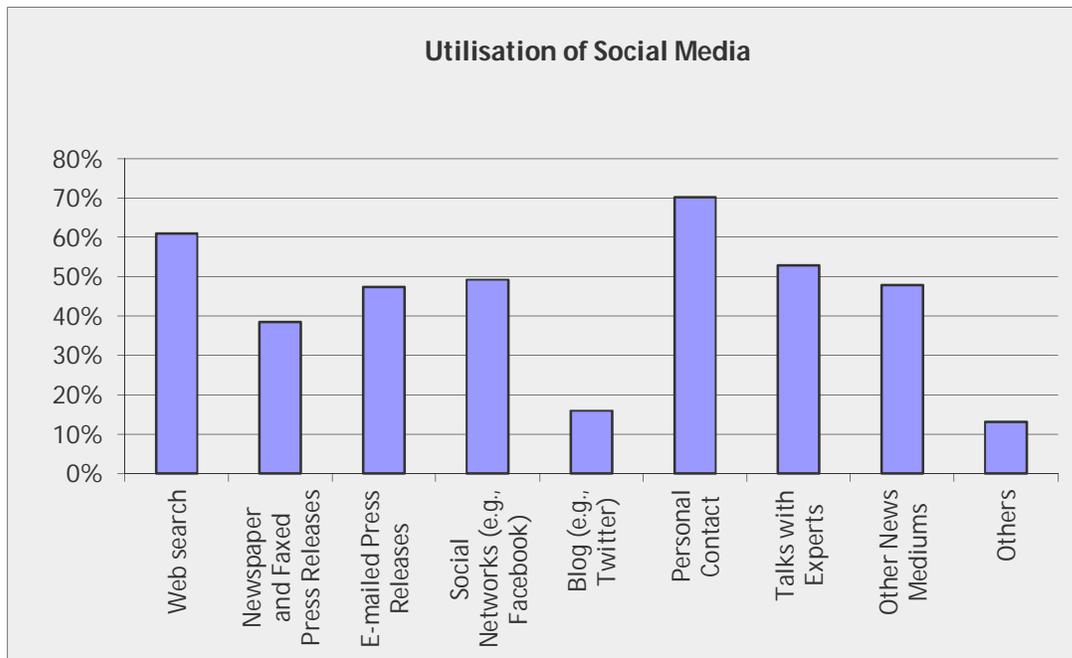
A high number of respondents recognise the important role of social media in their professional line of work. More than 90% of the respondents feel social media is important or very important for improving professional capacity, and 85.6% of the respondents see the importance of social network as sources of news and verification of information and 84.6% for research. The respondents also see the potential of using social networks to publish and distribute content online; 74.2% of them feel that social network will play an important role. About 82.1% of the respondents see the importance of social media for getting access to press releases.



**Sources of story, information, new story idea**

Majority of the respondents appear to use social media extensively in their professional line of work for sources of story and seek new information and story idea. About 70.3% and 52.9% of

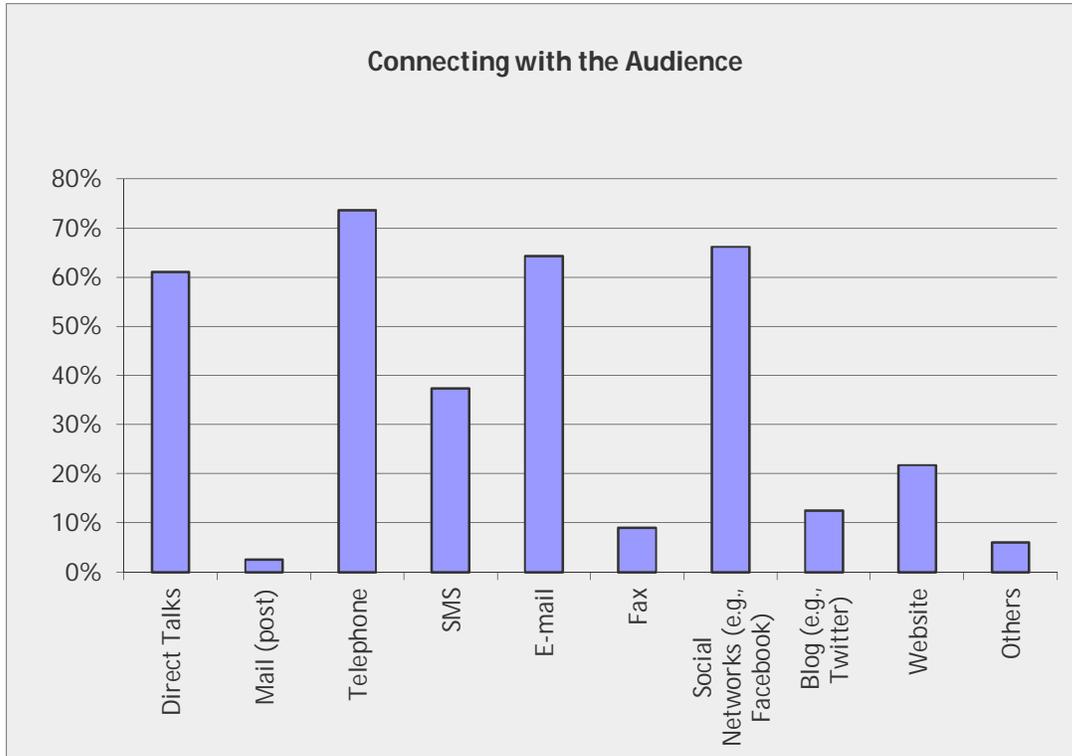
the respondents rely on personal contacts and talks with experts respectively for generating new story ideas, and 60.9% of the respondents use web searches to come up with new ideas, including 16% who read blogs. About half of the respondents use social networks for sources of stories, and 38.5% and 47.5% of the respondent use fax and e-mail press releases respectively as their sources of news.



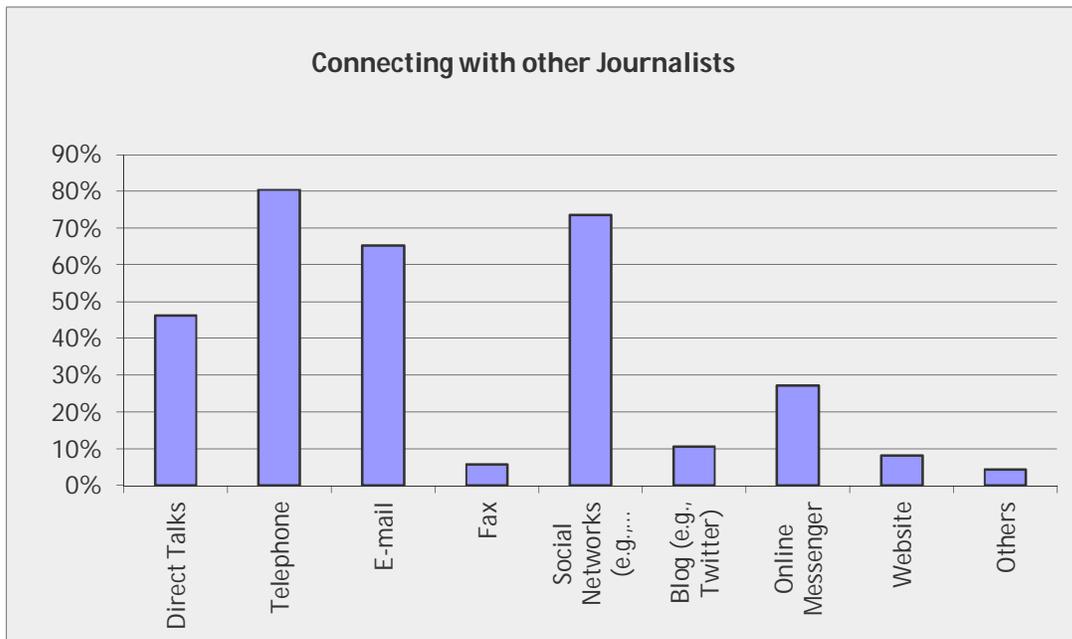
About 47.9% get their story ideas from other mediums, creating a situation of incestuous relationship where information and stories come from a virtuous circle. Though this might be due to weak institutional setup and support, this raises the spectre of plagiarism and poor professional ethics.

### ***Reaching out***

Despite increasing reliance on social media to generate story ideas, a majority of respondents still feel direct talks and telephone to be the easiest way to connect with readers, listeners, and audience. This is followed by e-mail and SMS (short message service) at 64.3% and 37.3% respectively. However, 66.2% believe target audience can be reached through social networks, while 21.7% believe websites are the best way to connect with readers.



Telephone is felt to be the easiest medium to contact other journalists for 80.4% of the respondents. Social networks serve the same purpose for 73.5% of the respondents and e-mail for 65.2%. About 46.2% of the respondents prefer direct talks. However, 27.2% prefer online messenger service to contact other fellow journalists.



### ***FNJ Member Communications***

With the advent of e-mail and spread of social networks, the use of the postal service, except for bulk delivery and important documents, seems to be declining. More than 51% would not prefer to receive anything through the postal service. Instead, majority of the respondents would prefer the use of social media and email to receive news and information from the FNJ, with 90.8% of the respondents preferring email and 71.5% SMS. More of the respondents prefer to receive notifications through Facebook group/page than Google/Yahoo groups and electronic newsletters combined. However, 68.4% of the respondents prefer the FNJ website to get notices. Interestingly, 68.1% of the respondents would prefer direct visit by FNJ.

The respondents who have been using social media for various lengths of time would still like to improve capacity to make a greater online presence. About 47.6% would like to specialisation training on using Facebook effectively to reach out to greater audience. But majority of the respondents would like a beginner's training on using Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, starting a blog, and webpage design. About 59.1% would like training on using RSS newsfeed to aid in their professional work.

# FNJ Social Media Survey

conducted with support from



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## **Federation of Nepali Journalists (FNJ)**

Central Office, Media Village–Tilganga, Kathmandu  
Phone: 977-1-4112763 / 4112673 Fax: 977-1-4112785  
URL: [www.fnjnepal.org](http://www.fnjnepal.org) Email: [fnjnepal@mail.com.np](mailto:fnjnepal@mail.com.np)