



Survey on Changed Online Behaviour During COVID-19 Lockdown in Nepal

24 April 2020

Background and Rationale

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government imposed a country-wide lockdown in Nepal from 24 March 2020. As a result, schools, colleges and offices are closed. People are staying at home and they are spending a longer time using internet. This may increase the risk of online abuse and exploitation, particularly to children and young people as child online groomers and online sex predators may contact them for abuse and exploitation.

According to Nepal Telecommunications Authority, 72.16 per cent¹ people of Nepal have access to broadband internet and 55.30 per cent use mobile broadband internet. Facebook is the most used social media platform in Nepal with 11 million active². The number of Facebook users, particularly among young age groups declined globally and in Nepal. However, the number of Facebook users increased by six hundred thousand from November 2019 to April 2020.

ChildSafeNet conducted a quick survey to understand cyber safety and online behaviour of children and young people as well as their parents during the lockdown. The survey findings will help ChildSafeNet and partners to design and implement cyber safety programmes, particularly during the lockdown period.

Methodology

The survey was conducted in all provinces of the country using online Google forms, distributed through social media platforms. The survey, self-administered by respondents started on 17 April 2020. Results of this report includes responses collected from 17 to 21 April 2020. The survey was conducted with young children, young people and adults. Since the behaviour of adults may affect children in many ways, the survey also collected information on adults' online behaviour.

In order to make the survey anonymous, no private information of respondents was collected.

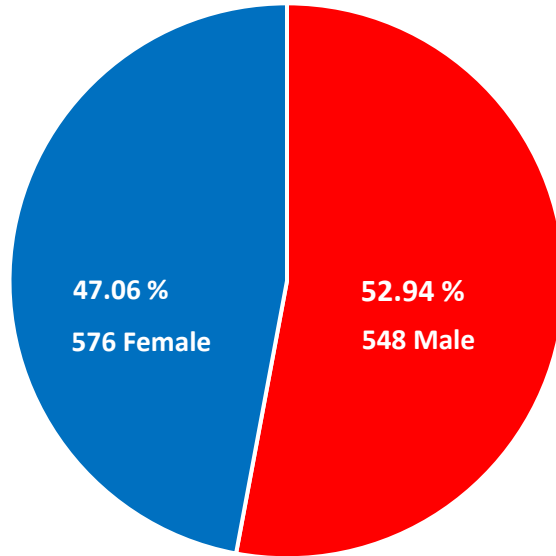
A total of 1,228 respondents (648 male, 576 and 4 other) had participated in the survey.

¹ Management Information System, Nepal Telecommunications Authority, Poush 2076, <https://nta.gov.np/wp-content/uploads/MIS-2076-Poush.pdf>

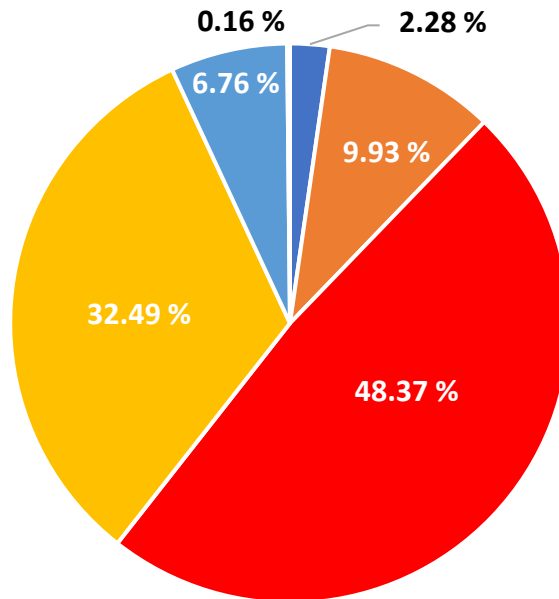
² Facebook, as on 24 April 2020

Key Findings

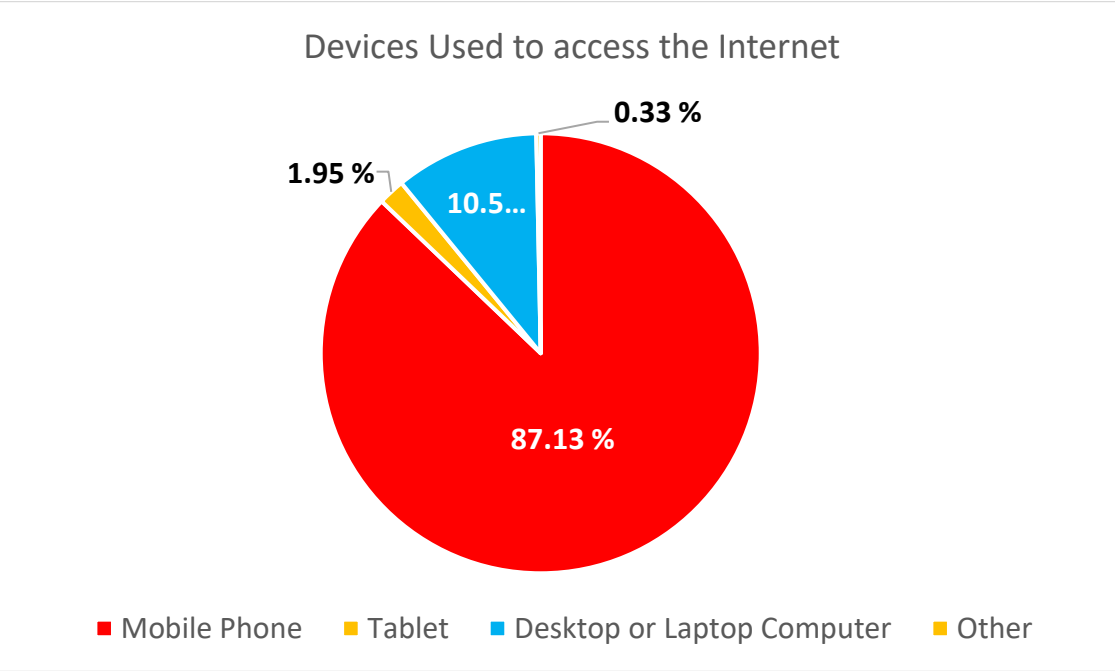
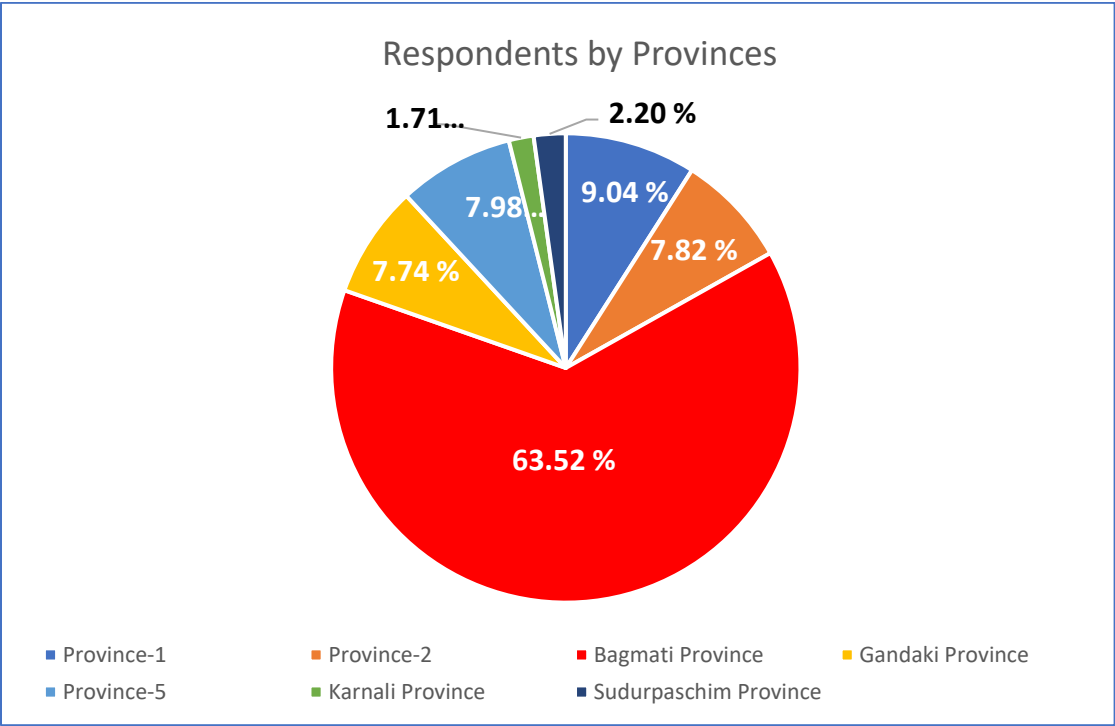
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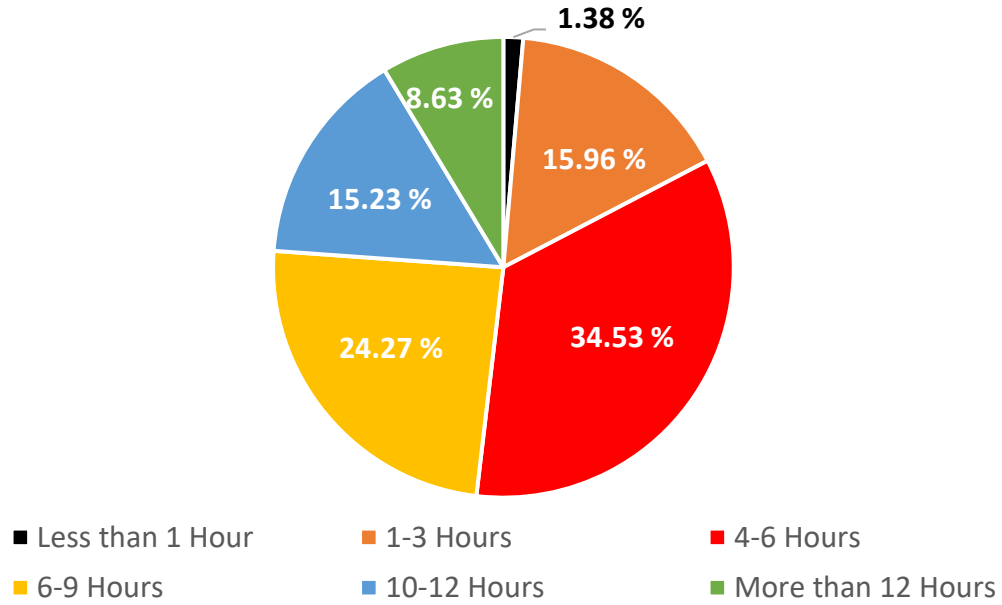
Respondents by Age



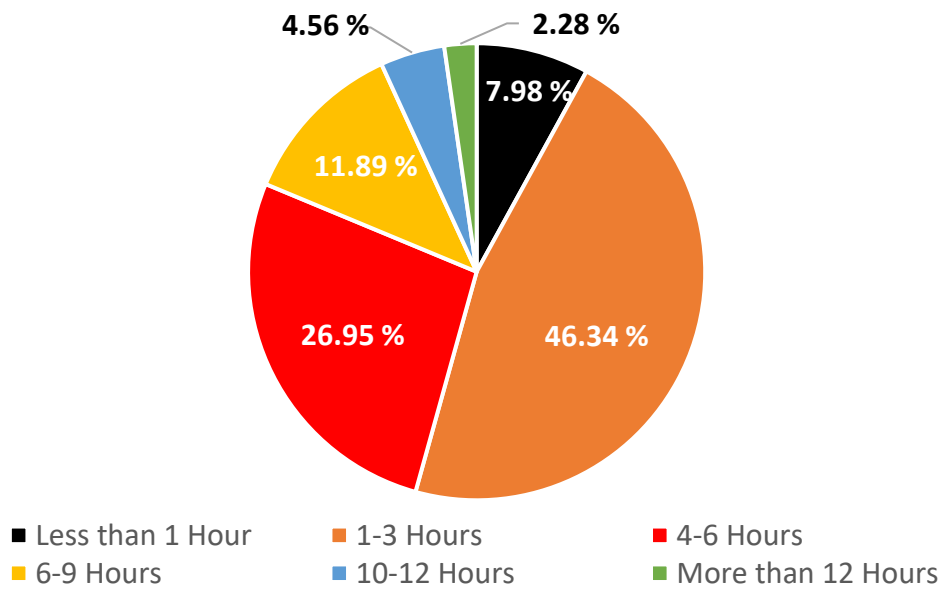
■ below 12 ■ 13-17 ■ 18-24 ■ 25-35 ■ 36-50 ■ 51 and above



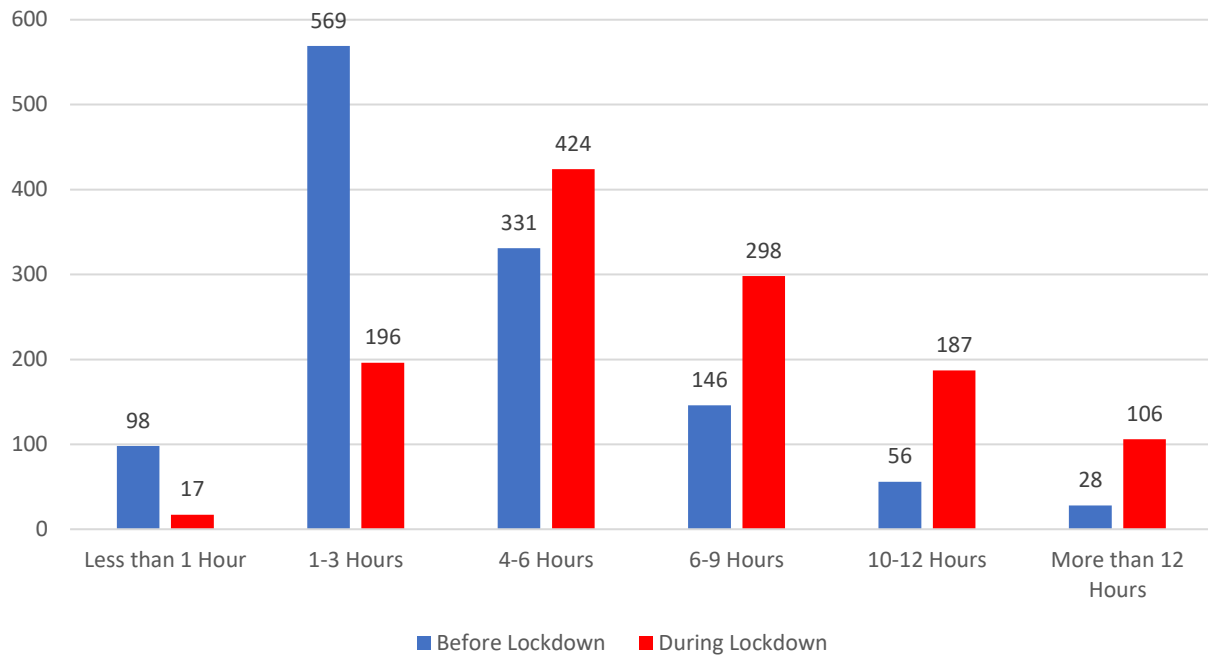
Daily Internet Usage During Lockdown



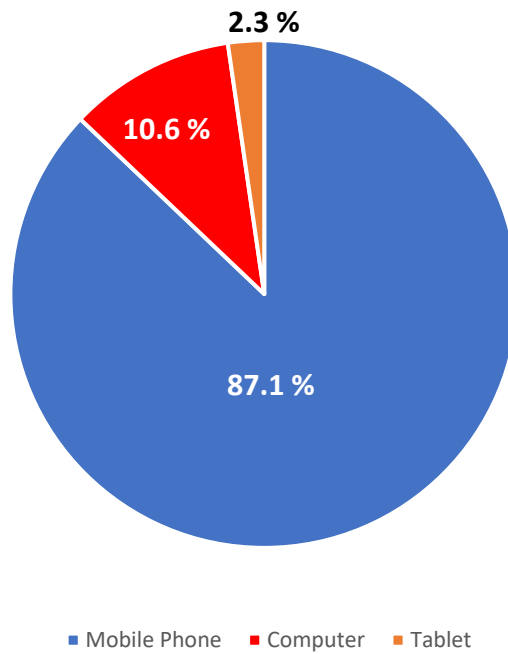
Daily Internet Usage Before Lockdown



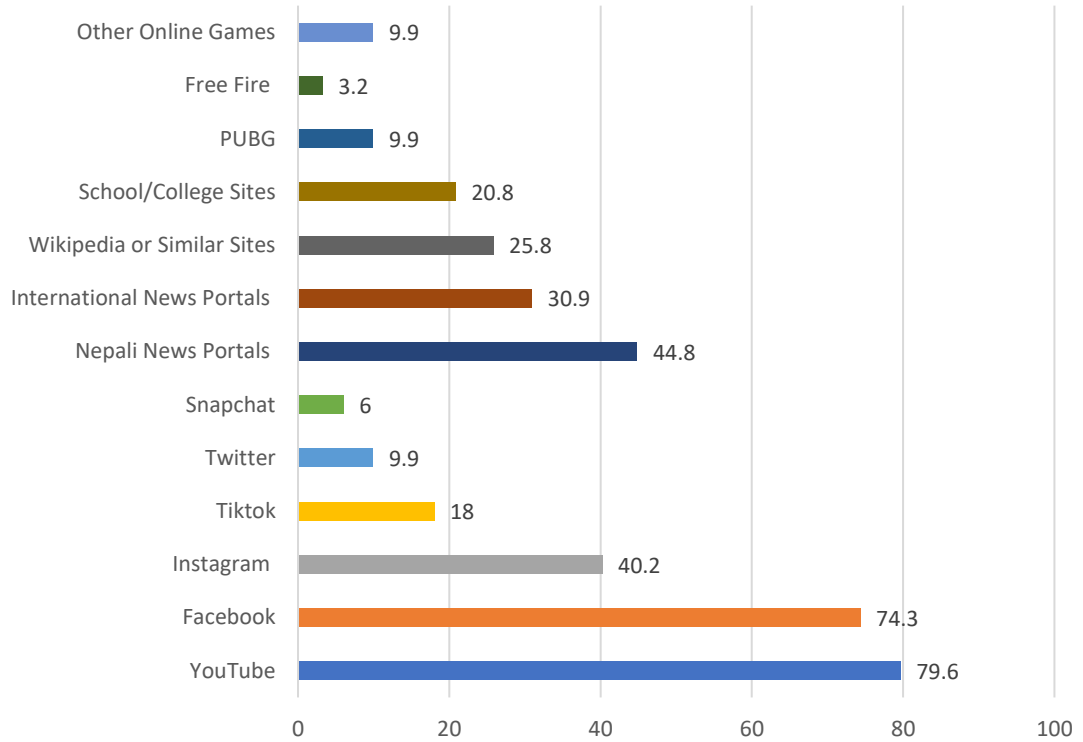
Daily Internet Usage Before and During Lockdown
(Number of Users)



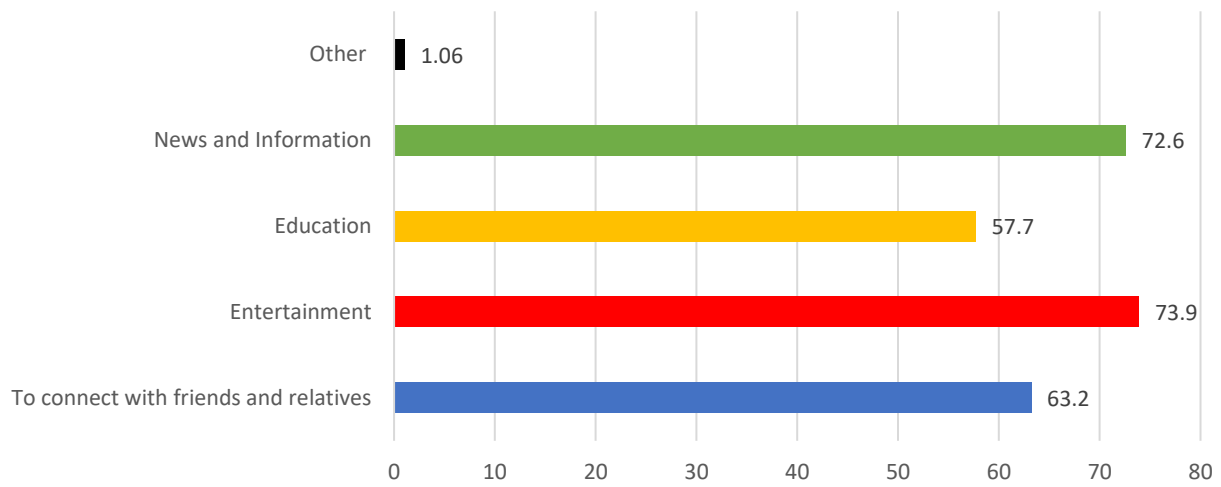
Devices Used to Access Internet



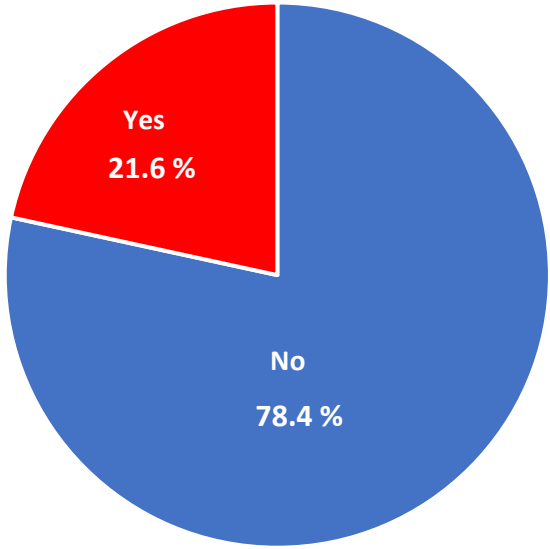
Most Used Sites, Apps and Programmes (Percentage)



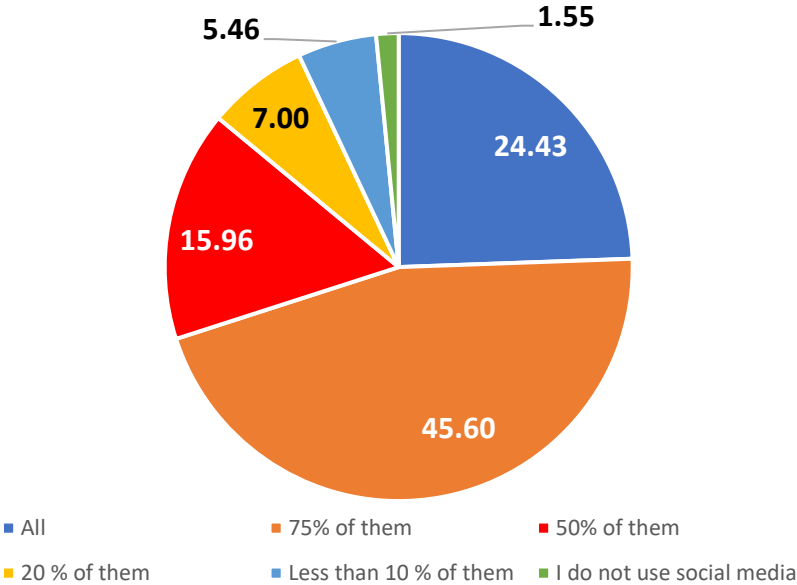
Purpose of the Internet Use (Percentage)



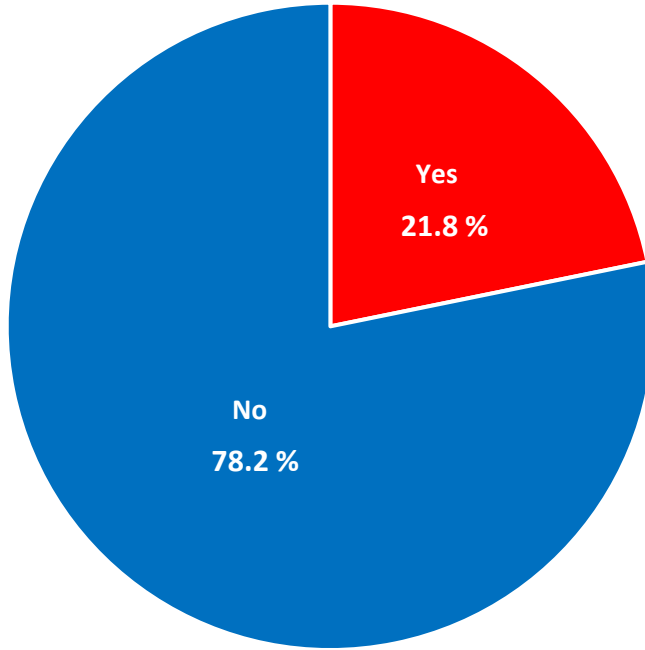
Use of live streaming (e.g. Facebook Live or other live video streaming services)



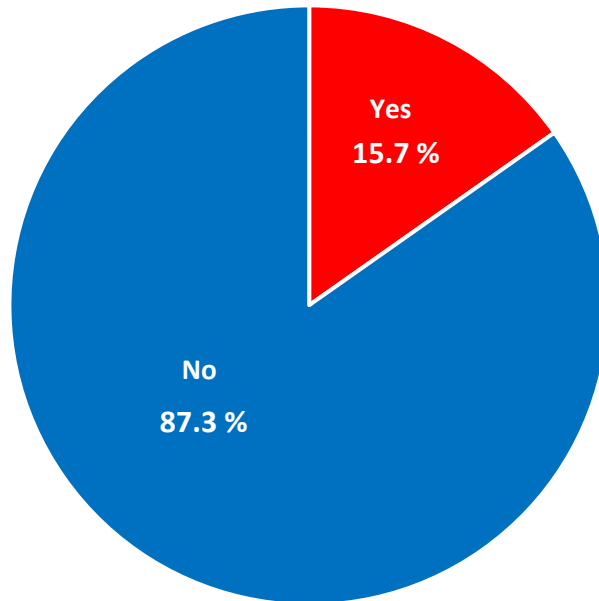
Online Friends Known in Real Life (Percentage)



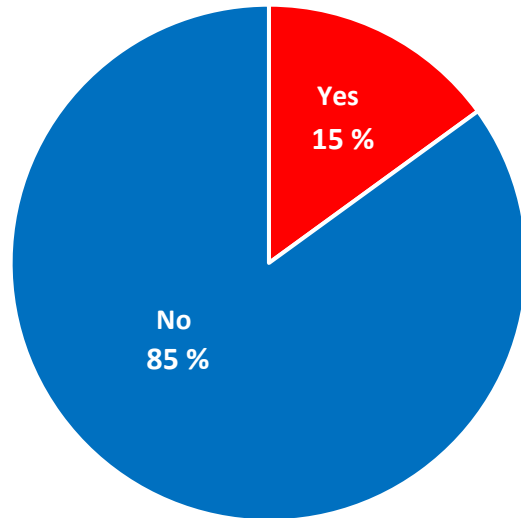
Friend Requests from Strangers Accepted



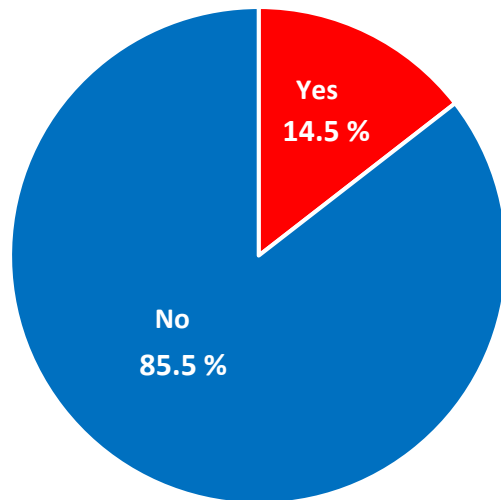
Friend Requests Sent to Strangers



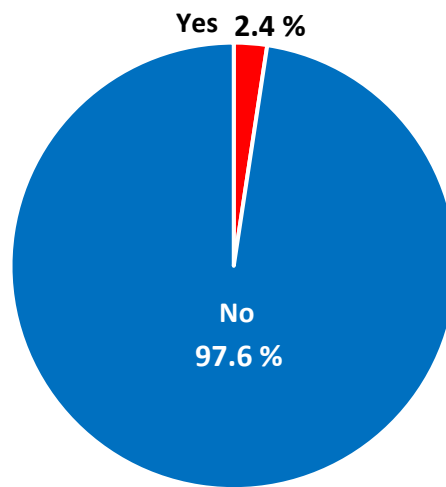
Did you receive hate or abusive messages?



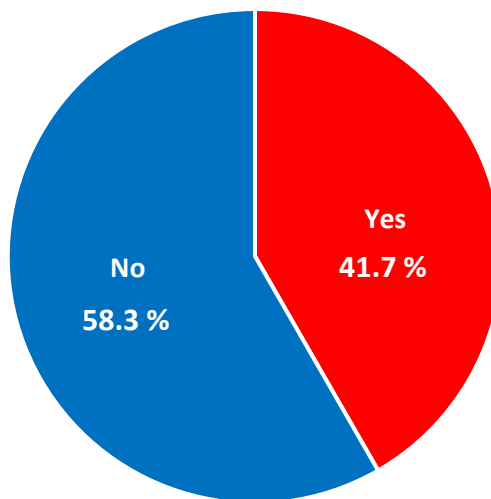
Did you receive sexual messages, photos or videos from strangers?

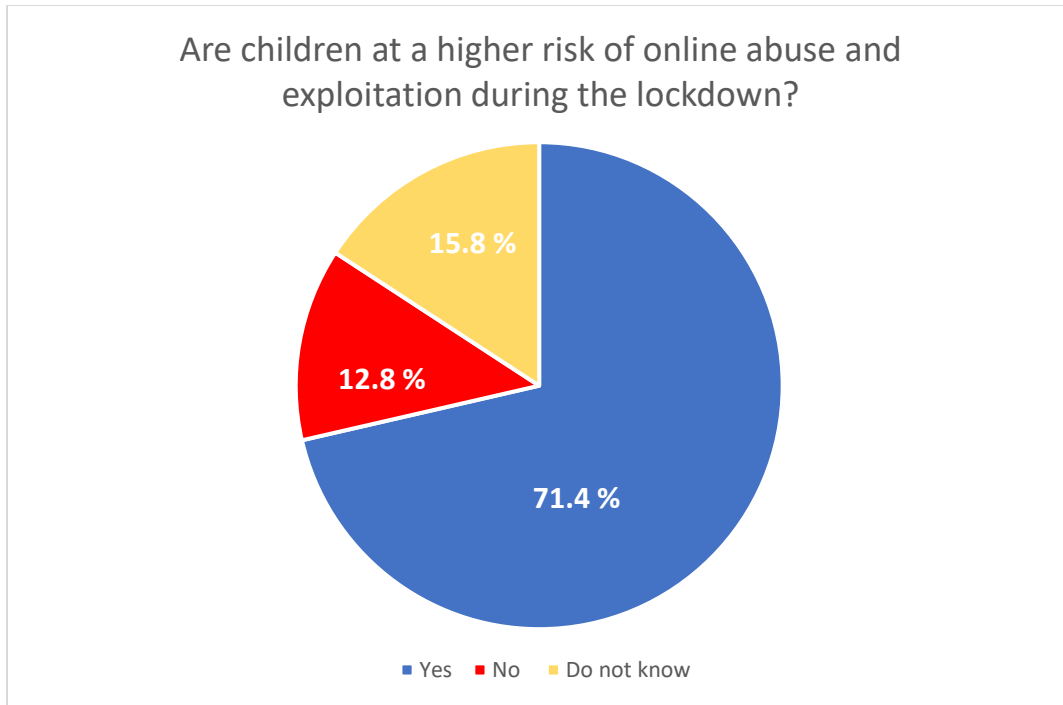


Did you send sexual messages, photos or videos to others?



Did you ever visit porn sites?





Key Recommendations:

- Cyber safety awareness sessions need to be conducted for children, young people and parents through online/virtual awareness activities through social media and video conferencing sessions.
- Video conferencing workshops on 'Parenting in the Digital Age' can help to equip parents with knowledge and skills to keep children and young people safe online. The workshops will help to provide guidance to parents on reducing their own screen time, learn about cyber safety and lead by example to protect children and young people from online harms.
- Educate children, young people and parents on the positive use of the internet & provide them information on sites and apps suitable for children. Inform them about useful and suitable sites according to their age and requirements.
- Develop simple and easy cyber safety resources in Nepali and local languages for dissemination through online media, including, but not limited to social media.
- Operate a dedicated online helpline to provide tips, advice and support to people who experience online harms or at risk; refer to support services - police, psychologists, lawyers, social workers, etc.
- Strengthen law enforcement to report online abuses and make reporting accessible throughout the country.
- Advocate for more financial and technical resources from the government, ICT companies and other duty-bearers to make the internet safer for children, young people and everyone.

Conclusion

According to the survey findings, children and young people could be at a higher risk of internet addiction, gaming addiction and exposure to adult contents. They could also be at a higher risk of online sexual abuse and exploitation. Although the government banned pornographic sites in Nepal, more than 41 per cent respondents, including children and young people said they had visited such sites. Issues like this also need to be addressed.

Detailed and thematic researches are required to develop in-depth knowledgebase to address the issue of online safety of children and young people during and after the lockdown period.

About ChildSafeNet

ChildSafeNet is a non-governmental organization, established with a mission to make the digital technology safer for children and young people. We work to raise awareness on safer use of the Internet and digital devices to protect children and young people from Internet addiction, online sexual abuse and exploitation, cyber-bullying, phishing, gaming addiction and to promote digital literacy.

Contact Information

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