

Factors Associated with the Usage of Social Media Security Features among Social Media Users in Western Province of Sri Lanka

H.M.U.G.S.M. Ekanayake¹ and C.S. Ranasinghe^{2,*}

*Department of Information Systems, Faculty of Management Studies,
Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Mihintale, Sri Lanka^{1,2}*

*Corresponding author: csranasinghe456@gmail.com

Abstract

With the growing popularity of social media, concerns about user privacy and online safety have intensified due to the increasing prevalence of cyber threats. Although most platforms offer various security features such as two-factor authentication, login alerts, and privacy controls, many users either underutilise or remain unaware of these tools. This study examines the factors influencing the usage of social media security features among users in Sri Lanka's Western Province, selected for its high internet penetration and diverse demographic representation. The research explores the relationships between the use of security features and four key factors: cybersecurity awareness, perceived risk, trust in platforms, and privacy concerns. A quantitative research approach was employed, using a structured online questionnaire distributed to 372 social media users selected through convenience sampling. Data were analysed using SPSS with descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis. Findings reveal that cybersecurity awareness and trust in social media platforms positively influence the use of security features, whereas privacy concerns have a significant negative effect. Perceived risk was positively related but not statistically significant. The results emphasise that enhancing user awareness and building trust in platforms can increase the adoption of protective features, while unresolved privacy concerns may discourage their use. This study provides valuable insights for platform developers, educators, and policymakers to promote safe social media practices and strengthen digital privacy. It also recommends further research on platform-specific behaviours and larger, more representative samples to broaden understanding in this area.

Keywords: cybersecurity awareness, social media security, privacy concerns, trust in platforms, perceived risk