

USING THE MOST POPULAR PHOTO EDITING APPS AND SELECTION CRITERIA AMONG USERS

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Annotation. The article analyzes what are the most used photo editing apps. The pros and cons of these apps are discussed. An analysis of the study in which students of Panevėžio kolegija/State Higher Education Institution participated. The aim of the study was to find out what criteria students follow when choosing photo editing apps, which ones they most often use for photo editing. It examines what problems they face when editing photos.

Keywords: photo editing apps, goal of photo editing, criteria, best photo editing apps

INTRODUCTION

In today's world, there is a lot of photography. Various programs are used to improve the image of photography. Photo editing apps are very popular because they help you improve the quality of your photos quickly and easily. The selection of applications is large. He edits photos to improve his appearance and that of his relatives and friends and creates beautiful photos. Photos are often posted on social networks.

Max Woolf (2025) writes that an average American takes out their smartphone to take a photo six times a day.

Camera and photo editing apps are among the most popular app categories, often high up the rankings of the highest-grossing apps (Richter, 2023).

Adobe Inc. released its popular Photoshop editing app for the iPhone, the first smartphone release of the industry-leading creative software. (Savov, 2025)

Photo editing apps are regularly used by roughly four in 10 smartphone users across several major markets, putting them behind basic apps such as email, browsers and social media and messenger apps but way ahead of the news, video, dating and fitness apps. (Richter, 2023).

Max Woolf (2025) writes that about 40% of smartphone users in major markets regularly use photo editing apps.

Purpose of the research: To analyze what criteria Panevėžio kolegija/State Higher Education Institution students follow when choosing photo editing programs and which of them they use most often.

The objectives of the research are:

1. Analyze why people use photo editing programs.
2. Explore what the most popular photo editing apps are used in the world.
3. To conduct an analysis of the survey of students of Panevėžio kolegija/State Higher Education Institution, the purpose of which was to find what apps do they use to edit photos, analyze what criteria students follow when choosing photo editing programs, what problems students face when editing photos.

OVERVIEW OF THE MOST POPULAR PHOTO EDITING APPS

The mobile launch adds to Adobe's Photoshop app for Apple Inc.'s iPad and the company plans a release for Alphabet Inc.'s Android later in the year. Many of Photoshop's core functions are available in the free version, including editing photos in layers and generative AI. (Savov, 2025).

Adobe is at the forefront of design and photo editing software for desktop computers.

Table 1 shows data about downloading photo editing apps.

Table 1.

Number of photo editing apps downloaded

(By Woolf, M. (2025) *18+ Mobile Photography Statistics for 2025*. <https://photoaid.com/blog/mobile-photography-statistics/?srltid=AfmBOOrIgqFKg9kQpoOCmDaruZvsm7RnloBUWJw9yZSBcBVVwgXyxmPQ>)

Most Popular US Photo & Video Editing Apps (2023)	Number of Downloads
Remini – AI Photo Enhancer	4577379
Canva: Design, Photo & Video	942591
PicsArt AI Photo Editor, Video	810517
AI Mirror: AI Art Photo Editor	555962
PhotoRoom AI Photo Editor	439366
Lightroom Photo & Video Editor	423106
Facetune AI Photo/Video Editor	380735
Photoshop Express Photo Editor	376483
Hypic – Photo Editor & AI Art	351540

Free photo editing apps have the ability to edit photos by applying filters to them, changing brightness, contrasts, and using AI-controlled effects.

The article "A Complete Guide to Free Photo Editing Apps for Mobile: Top Picks, Tips, and Tricks" lists the top 26 photo editing apps used in Lithuania. Table 2 lists the top five most popular.

Table 2.

Top Five Most Popular Photo Editing Apps, Their Capabilities and Benefits

(By Išsamus nemokamų nuotraukų redagavimo programų mobiliesiems vadovas: geriausi pasirinkimai, patarimai ir gudrybės. <https://lt.todoandroid.es/geriausios-nemokamos-nuotrauk%C5%B3-redagavimo-programos/>)

App name	Use, benefits
Adobe Photoshop Express	Ideal for quick corrections, color correction, frames, stickers, cropping, and collage creation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> User-friendly interface and built-in tutorials for beginners. Tools for smart cropping, selective editing, and background replacement. Various customizable filters and visual effects.
Lightroom Mobile	Features powerful sliding adjustments for exposure, contrast, saturation, curves, white balance, and RAW file editing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports RAW files, which are essential in professional digital photography. The ability to create and use profiles, preset parameters, and copy settings between photos. Allows you to remove backgrounds, perform complex skin retouching and select details with brushes.
Snapseed	Versatile and powerful photo editing app. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selective control by zones (control point). Curve adjustment, white balance, brightness and advanced structure Edit and export RAW to JPG
Pixlr	Easily available on mobile devices, allows you to work with layers, masks, precise cuts, filters, blur, RAW editing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> color correction, general improvement, correction of skin and eye color. Collage, text, stickers, frames, and templates for social media
Canva	Full-fledged graphic design studio. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes millions of editable templates, image galleries, AI image generators, and branding kits. Simple but effective adjustments: contrast, brightness, hues, vignettes and creative filters.

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

We found out the opinion of 137 student's full-time students of Panevėžio kolegija. The aim of the study is to find out what criteria students follow when choosing photo editing programs and which of them they use most often, and what problems students face when editing photos.

Students of 3 faculties participated in the research. Student participation by faculty is shown in Figure 1. The most active were the students of the Faculty of Social Sciences in 38.7% of the respondents who participated in the research, 35.0% of the Faculty of Biomedicine Sciences, 26.3% of the Technology Science Faculty.

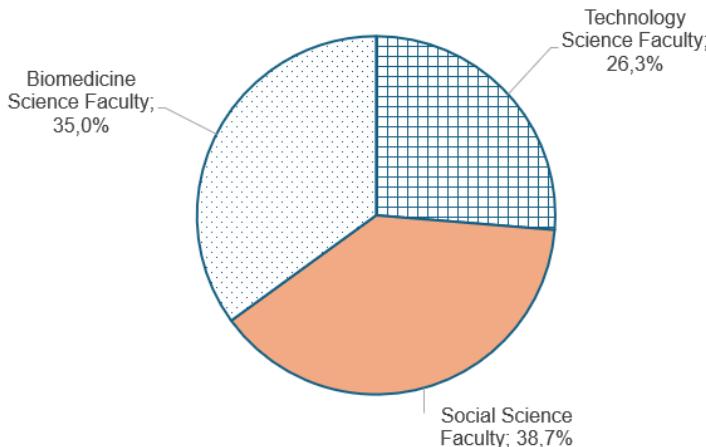


Figure 1. Distribution of respondents by faculty

The distribution of survey respondents by study course is shown in Figure 2. The most active participants in the survey were 1st year students (54.0%). 21.9% and 16.8.4% of the 2nd and 3rd year students took part in the survey. The lowest participation in the survey was 4th year students (7.3%).

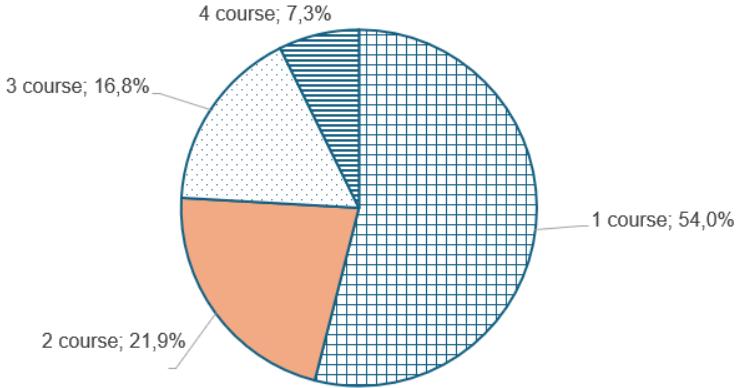


Figure 4. Distribution of respondents by course

Most students are under the age of 30. Figure 5 shows the results of the distribution of respondents who participated in the study by faculties and age groups. In the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences, 50% of respondents were over 30 years old, in the Faculty of Technological Sciences – 38.89% of respondents aged 21-25. In the Faculty of Social Sciences – 43.40% of respondents are over 30 years old.

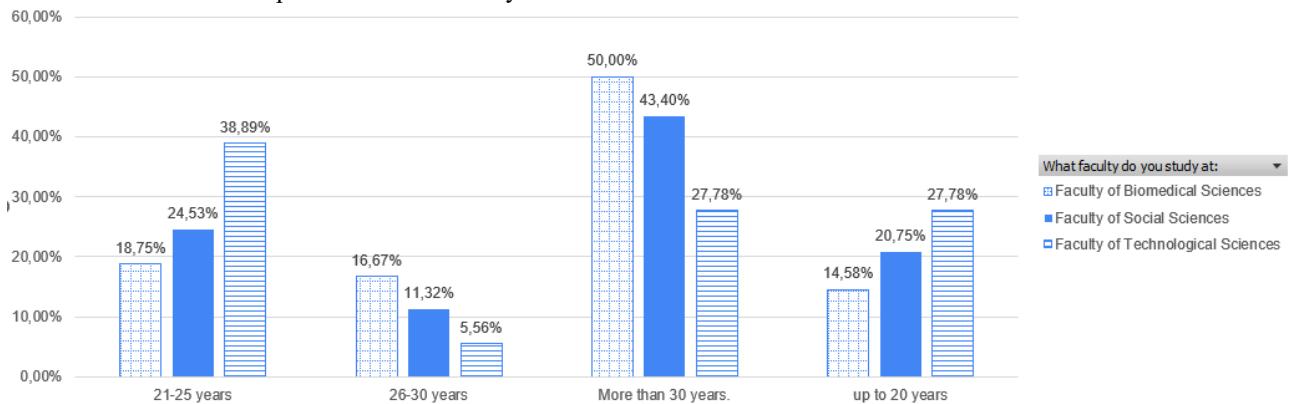


Figure 5. Distribution of respondents by faculties and age groups.

Students of Panevėžys kolegija often edit photos. The study found that 20.83% of students from the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences and 18.87% Students of the Faculty of Social Sciences edit their photos several times a week. Very rarely, 64.58% of students of the Faculty of Biomedicine and 54.72% of students of the Faculty of Social Sciences edit photos. Students of the Faculty of Technological Sciences edit photos at least once a month by 30.56%. The results of the study are shown in Figure 6.

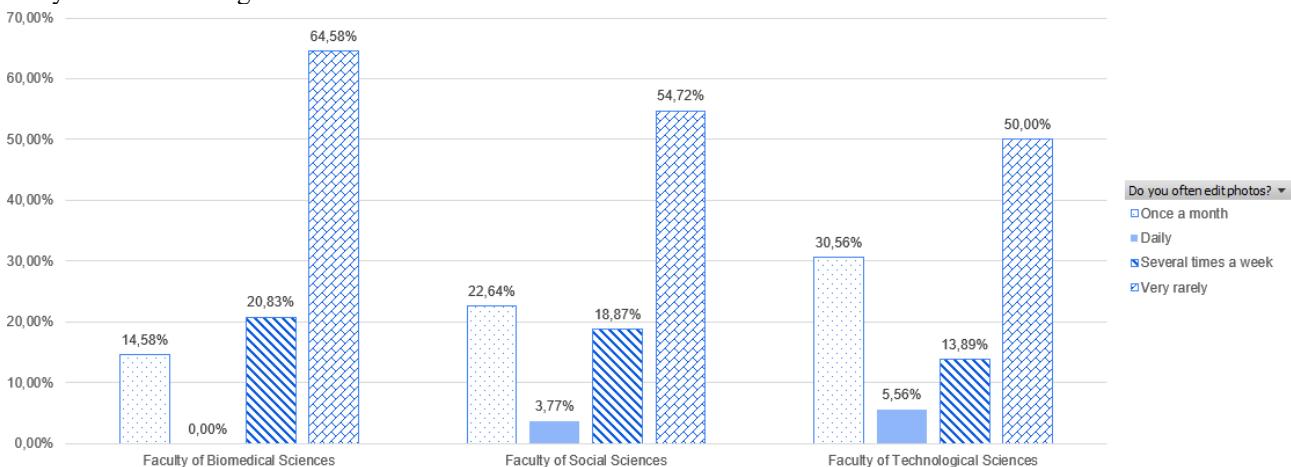


Figure 6. Average time spent editing photos per week

Students of Panevėžys kolegija use the most popular photo editing programs in the world for photo editing. Most students use Canva (34.3%), Adobe Photoshop (32.8%), Snapseed (13.8%), Lightroom Mobile (16.8%) to edit photos. The results of the study are presented in Figure 7. We can see that students use the most popular photo editing apps.

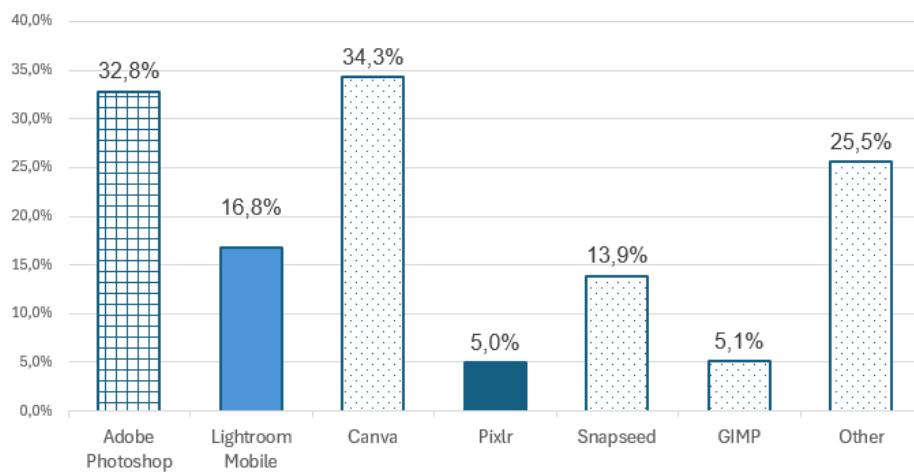


Figure 7. The most used programs for photo editing

During the study, it was found out on which device students most often edit photos. The largest number of students edit photos only on a smartphone 56.9%, only on a computer – 18.2%, and on a computer or smartphone – 21.2%.

Photos are edited for a wide variety of purposes. The study found that students most often edit photos for personal use – 62.0%, and for social networks – 53.3%. She also edits photos for work and creativity and for science or studies. The results of the study are shown in Figure 9.

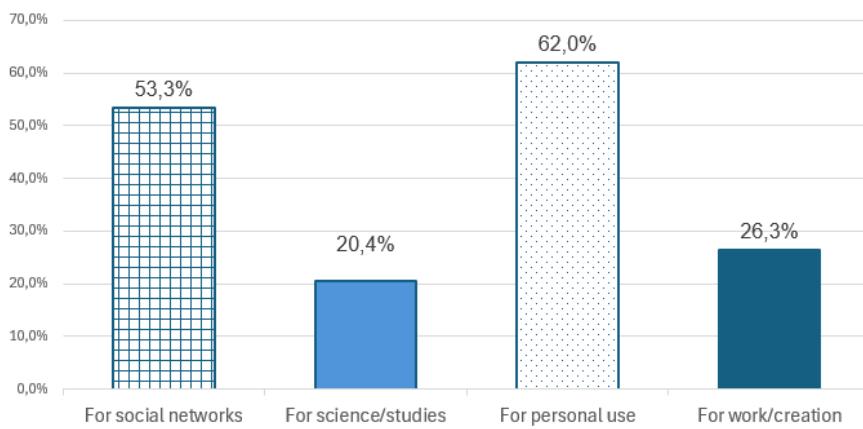


Figure 9. Purpose of photo editing

The study found that when choosing a photo editing program, ease of use is very important for students of the Faculty of Biomedicine – 80.95%, for students of the Faculty of Social Sciences – 66.67%. For students of the Faculty of Technological Sciences, the ease of use of the program is not important 44.44%. The results of the study are shown in Figure 10.

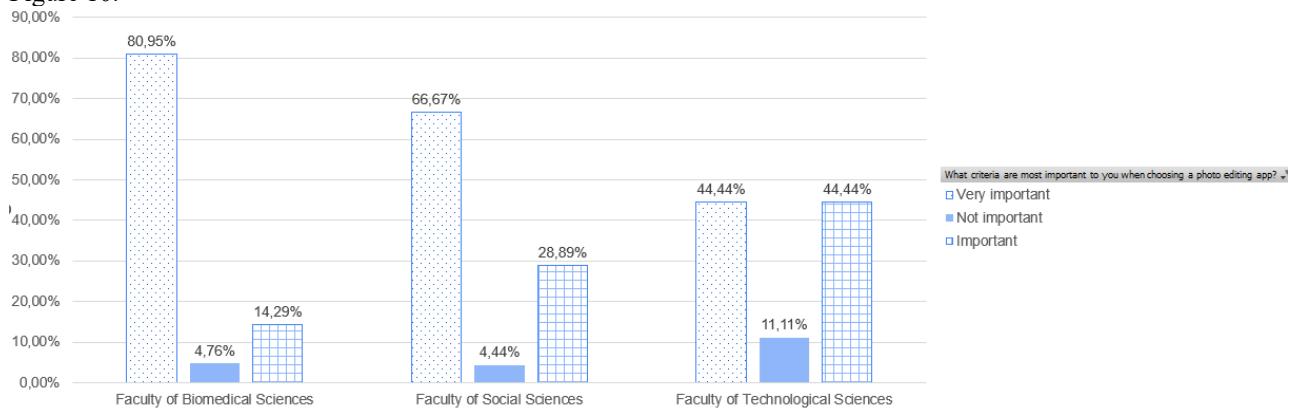


Figure 10. Criterion: "Ease of use" when choosing a photo editing program

The study found that when choosing a photo editing program, design quality and filters is very important for students of the Faculty of Biomedicine – 60.47%, for students of the Faculty of Social Sciences – 61.36%. The results of the study are shown in Figure 11.

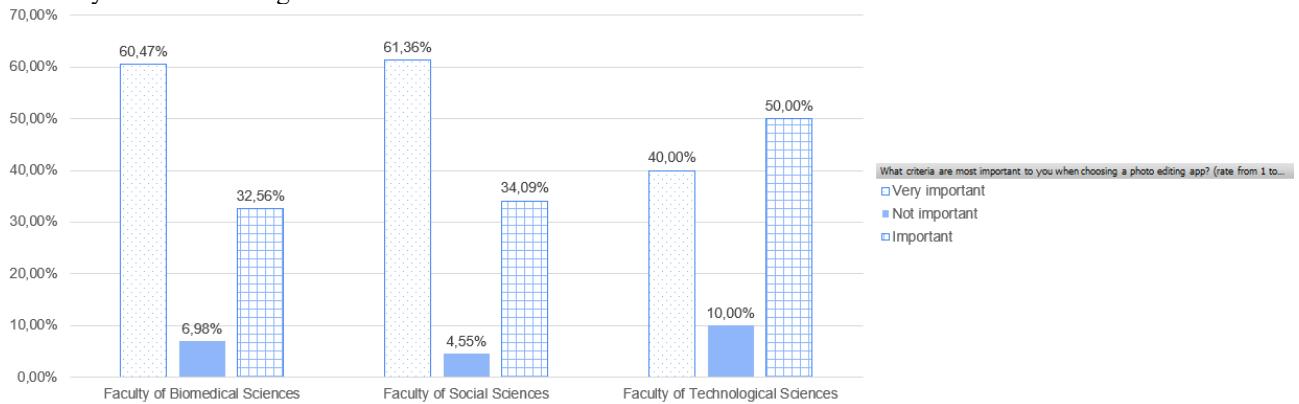


Figure 11. Criterion: "Design quality and filters" when choosing a photo editing program

Students were encouraged to use the photo editing program by recommendations from friends 19.7% of studies and the need for work 19.0%, accidentally discovered by 46.0%, and social media advertising – 8.0%.

Students of Panevėžio kolegija/State Higher Education consider Adobe Photoshop to be the best photo editing program – 35.0%, Adobe Lightroom – 13.9%, and Canva – 22.6%.

A significant part of the photos is posted on social networks. Students' opinions were investigated on whether photo editing affects their image on social networks. The results of the study are shown in Figure 12. The study found that 27.08% of the students of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences are affected, that partially 47.92%. That is influenced by 30.19% of students of the Faculty of Social Sciences, that is partially 52.83%. That affects claims 25.00% of the students of the Faculty of Technological Sciences, that is partially 47.22%.

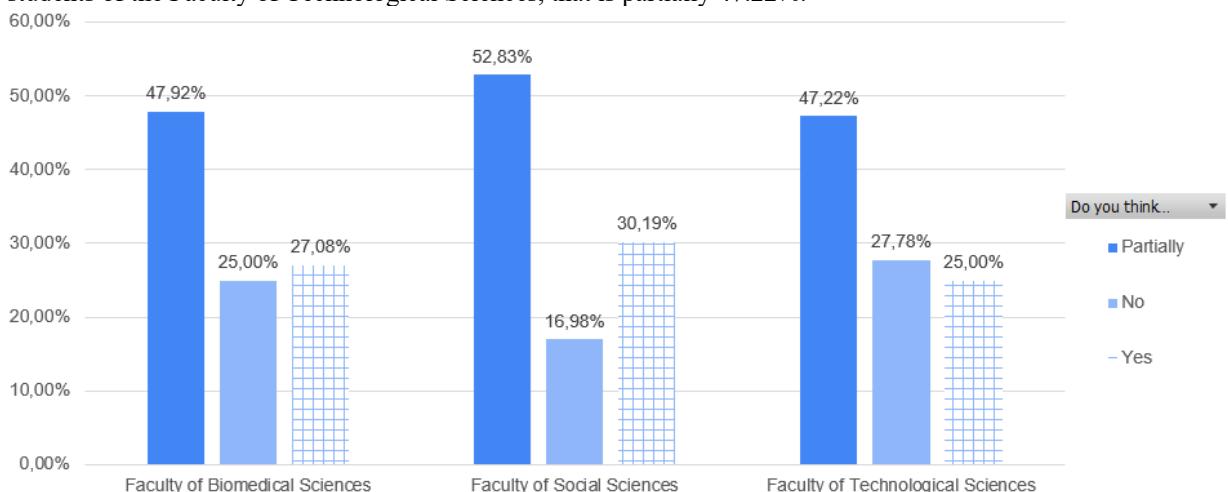


Figure 12. Respondents' opinion on whether photo editing affects your image on social networks

It was investigated what problems the students of Panėvėžys kolegija face when editing photos. The study found that it faces limited features in the free version (64.2%), too much advertising – 51.1%, complex management and unclear tools – 48.2%. Sometimes students encounter technical problems (jams, errors) 39.4%, rarely encounter problems 35.0%, very often – 8%, never – 17.5%.

The aim of the study was to determine what skills students lack the most when editing photos. It was found that most often in photo editing skills are lacking in removing backgrounds and editing objects for students of the Faculty of Biomedicine 45.45%, Faculty of Social Sciences – 36.00%, Faculty of Technological Sciences – 38.71%. Students of the Faculty of Biomedicine are missing 28.45% of creative design skills, 24.00% of the Faculty of Social Sciences, and 25.81% of the Faculty of Technological Sciences. The results of the study are shown in Figure 13.

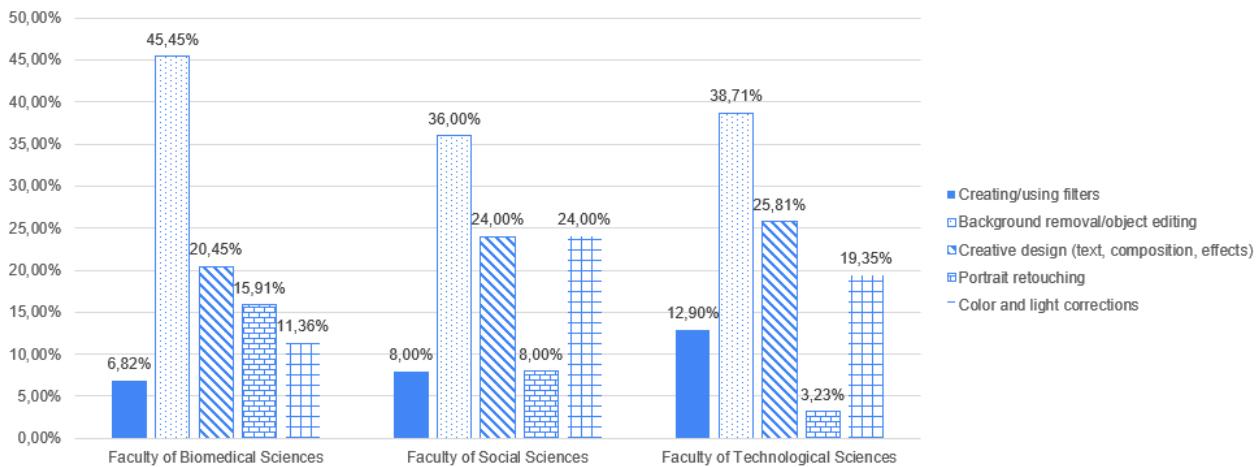


Figure 13. The most common problems when editing photos

The aim of the study was to determine whether students would like to participate in training or seminars on photo editing. It was found that 69.7% of students would like to participate in such training. They think it would be interesting and useful.

CONCLUSIONS

1. After analyzing why people use photo editing apps, it was found that people edit photos to improve their image.
2. The study found that the most popular photo editing apps used in the world in terms of the number of downloads are Remini – AI Photo Enhancer, Canva, Picsart, AI Mirror, PhotoRoom AI Photo Editor, Lightroom Photo, Facetune AI, Photoshop Express Photo Editor, Hypic – Photo Editor & AI Art, BeautyPlus-AI. The top five most popular applications in the world: Adobe Photoshop Express, Lightroom Mobile, Snapseed, Pixlr, Canva.
3. After conducting an analysis of the survey of students of Panevėžys University of Applied Sciences, the purpose of which was to analyze what programs they use for photo editing, what criteria students follow when choosing photo editing programs, it was found that:
 - Students of Panevėžys kolegija use the most popular photo editing programs in the world for photo editing.
 - Students of Panevėžys kolegija often edit photos. Most of the time, he edits the photos several times a week. When choosing a photo editing app, they choose to make it easy to use on the phone and be easy to operate. Most of their photos are edited to justify their image on social networks.
 - When working with photo editing programs mainly was found that most often in photo editing skills are lacking in removing backgrounds and editing objects. Students would like to participate in training or seminars on photo editing.

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