

Social Media in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Opportunities and Ethical Challenges

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ABSTRACT

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Using a mixed-method approach that combines survey data from 619 participants and insights from a focus group consisting of 25 persons, this study investigates the perceptions of users regarding the incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) in social media platforms within the country of Kuwait. According to the findings, users have a moderate level of awareness regarding artificial intelligence technologies and a widespread recognition of the benefits these technologies offer in terms of expanding content personalization, improving user experience, and increasing platform efficiency. Participants have expressed significant worries over privacy, surveillance, misinformation, algorithmic transparency, and ethical hazards, despite the fact that these advantages have been acknowledged. Differences between the sexes were seen, with female participants exhibiting a greater understanding of the ethical concerns of artificial intelligence. In addition, quantitative studies indicate that users have a significant propensity to engage with artificial intelligence tools in the future, despite the fact that their actual experience with AI is yet limited. Despite the fact that users like the usefulness of AI, the study comes to the conclusion that issues over data security and transparency need to be addressed in order to create trust. It is suggested that legislators, platform designers, and educators should follow these recommendations in order to facilitate the integration of AI in a manner that is responsible and user-centered.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Social Media; User Perceptions; Kuwait.

1. Introduction

In the modern online environment, social media networks have developed as potent resources that affect the patterns of communication, promotion, and sociopolitical processes. Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok and X (previously Twitter) and other platforms are becoming more dependent on Artificial Intelligence (AI) to improve user engagement and content customisation, as well as to automatically moderate the platform (Elsir and Badur, 2024; Qaruty, AL-Tkhayneh, Hadi, Qaruty and Kamel Ellala, 2023). These platforms can use AI technologies, such as natural language processing, image recognition, and behavioral prediction models, to process huge amounts of data so they can produce curated content that meets the user preferences (Bughin, Hazan, Sree Ramaswamy, and Chu, 2017). Though these innovations have a considerable positive effect in the areas of efficiency, personalization, and effectiveness in marketing, they also present a serious threat to ethical and social values. The data privacy issue, the transparency of algorithms, misinformation, and bias have been fairly reported in recent studies (Saheb, Sidaoui, and Schmarzo, 2024). The authors claimed that in the absence of proper governance systems, the AI systems will be viewed as invasive or abusive (Vinuesa et al., 2020).

Indicatively, the algorithms of deep learning in the maximisation of user experience can also strengthen filter bubbles and enhance disinformation, and may do so in unintended ways that manipulate user behaviour. Although the use of AI in social media has become common, few studies have been done to examine how people view this integration, especially in the Gulf region, and in the case of Kuwait (Al-Hunaiyyan et al., 2021). The issue of how users strike the balance between the opportunities offered by AI-enhanced interaction and the concerns of surveillance, autonomy, and digital ethics needs to be explored. Moreover, since the most recent research indicates that gender can also have an impact on the attitude to AI technologies (Pendy, 2023), the analysis of demographic differences can be useful to platform developers and policy-makers. To fill these gaps, this paper seeks to determine how the users in Kuwait regard the position of AI in the social media setting. In scientific terms, the work of this research makes the digital communication and information behavior more redefinable with the help of the AI technologies that are changing the digital world: recommendation systems, automated moderation, and generative content tools (Joshi, Rambola, and Churi, 2021).

The main goal of the study is to conduct research on how users perceive the concept of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies being used in social media. Particularly, the proposed research will evaluate the degree of user awareness about these technologies and can investigate how users evaluate the opportunities that AI opens to them, i.e., better user experience, personal content delivery, and platform efficiency. Concurrently, the study investigates the concerns of users regarding the ethical issues of AI, especially the ones pertaining to privacy, misinformation, transparency, and algorithmic bias. The research is also aimed at revealing the gender-related differences in the attitude and use of AI-based social media functions. It is on these findings that the research will provide strategic advice to enable social media platforms to build more trust and awareness in the use of AI technologies. The research objectives of this study as follows:

- Assess users' awareness of AI technologies used in social media platforms.
- Explore perceptions of the opportunities of AI offers in terms of enhancing the user experience, content personalization, and platform efficiency.
- Examine concerns and challenges about AI's role in social media, particularly regarding privacy, algorithmic bias, misinformation, and transparency.
- Recommend strategies: for social media platforms to improve public understanding and trust regarding the use of AI technologies.

This paper is structured in the following manner; the literature review will be presented in part 2, and the method will be revealed in section 3. Section 4 contains the study results and they are discussed in Section 5. Section 6 expounds implications and future studies whereas section seven concludes the study by providing recommendations.[25]

2. Literature Review

There are a number of opportunities and challenges associated with Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the social media. Artificial intelligence helps to conduct customised marketing campaigns, streamline the data analysis process, and enhance interaction with users. It maximizes valuable marketing studies, brand loyalty, and foster the well-being of internet communities (Benabdelouahed, Dakouan, and Management, 2020). The areas of AI use in social media include content optimization, audience analysis, conversational agents, and sentiment analysis (Saheb, Sidaoui, and Schmarzo, 2024). However, there is also an ethical challenge brought by AI, such as the spread of fake news and concerns about data privacy (Qaruty, AL-Tkhayneh, Hadi, Qaruty, and Kamel Ellala, 2023). The integration of AI into social media has a role in the business, in the regulatory policies of the government, and in the transformation of the society and the community, and it is necessary to exercise a cautious approach that balances the benefits and the disadvantages. The main issues include algorithmic bias reduction, deep fakes and misinformation, and ensuring the adequate use of AI (Saheb, Sidaoui, and Schmarzo, 2024). With the growing impact of artificial intelligence on social media, it will be necessary to use ethical systems and empower users to sustain a positive impact on the digital society (Qaruty, AL-Tkhayneh, Hadi, Qaruty, & Kamel Ellala, 2023). According to (Joshi, Rambola, and Churi, 2021), the successful application of AI technology can significantly affect people and play a crucial role in the global economy by enhancing

innovation, job creation, and economic growth. Papadakis (2022), assumes that the global governments and politicians are more geared towards the successful adoption of technology and human well-being to foster societal progress. Different studies analyze the opportunities and issues of AI in social life. The article by Faraasyatul 'Alam (2024) was an extensive investigation of the potential advantages, challenges, and recommendations on future research on the topic. According to their findings, the use of AI in personalized learning is currently at the experimental stage, and resources are lacking as well as there are ethical issues. According to a study by (Joshi, Rambola, and Churi, 2021), the AI technology is also used to improve the detection and assessment of critical thinking skills, thus making it possible to provide effective and customized feedback. Furthermore, Pendy (2023) also provides a dynamic literature review on the application of AI emphasizing its benefits and issues.

In a study by (Sadiku, Ashaolu, Ajay-Majebi, and Musa, 2021), various artificial intelligence technologies and their impact on the social media organizations are explored, and it is observed that the use of AI to social media is growing at a pace never witnessed and is continuously changing the social media landscape. The article by (Qaruty, AL-Tkhayneh, Hadi, Qaruty, and Kamel Ellala, 2023) looks at the interaction between social media and AI focusing on the advantages and issues with this interaction. Similarly, (Saheb, Sidaoui, and Schmarzo, 2024) looks at the intersection of AI and social media. The researcher takes a mixed-method strategy to evaluate 1540 academic sources, combining bibliometric and systematic literature review procedures. The research will be focused on revealing the most relevant topics and trends, along with potential commercial opportunities and implications, in the AI Social Media industry. This comprehensive evaluation of the current situation with AI in social media provides a comprehensive understanding of future usage and major implications of this cross-disciplinary relationship.

The use of social media is an expressive behavior of how people react to AI-driven spaces. Users get to know, sense, and trust how to handle intelligent systems as they engage with customized feeds, recommendation systems, and algorithmically filtered content (Gu, 2024; Oeldorf-Hirsch, 2018). This kind of interaction forms a type of experiential learning that strengthens digital resilience and increases the preparations to more complicated AI uses (Al-Huwail et al., 2025). It is possible that users that use the functionalities of AI actively on social media get accustomed to the use of AI tools in other areas such as education, e-government, and organizational processes (Cepeda-Carrión et al., 2022). According to the recent scholarship, the digital competence and be aware of the algorithm have become important factors to workforce adaptability in an AI-enhanced setting (Al-Hunaiyyan et al., 2025; Al-Hunaiyyan et al., 2023). The use of such technologies in learning settings is associated with others (Wickneswary et al., 2024), and learning style (Alhajri and Al-Hunaiyyan, 2016).

It has been discussed earlier that past research has significantly examined how artificial intelligence may be used in the subsequent production and management of social media content in the context of small companies (Alainati et al., 2024). The statement that AI can develop content that could suit particular target audiences and identify trends and patterns through data processing is unfounded (Grandinetti, 2021). Social media content has been improved based on the real time content analysis with the help of AI. This statement of (Zhang, Chen, and Phang, 2018) about AI-based algorithms tracking on social media platforms and real-time aspects such as popular topics, sentiment, and user activity is not true. The ability allows social media marketers to quickly react to emerging trends and engage with individuals on a real-time basis. However, the impact of AI on the social media content is problematic, and one of the problems is the possibility of the algorithmic bias. The AI systems could unintentionally reproduce and amplify the existing biases in created material (Whittaker, et al., 2018). The suggestions in AI algorithms can reproduce stereotypes or discriminate against the groups of people. The given issue highlights the relevance of ethical concerns in the creation and use of AI in social media marketing. The current progress of the AI technology is projected to substitute past manual procedures social media marketers used to conduct, such as content creation and evaluation (Bughin, Hazan, Sree Ramaswamy, and Chu, 2017). Such a development can cause the replacement of certain labor posts, therefore, necessitating reskilling and upskilling interventions. In more updated research, Weidinger et al. (2022) talked about risks of generative AI being magnified due to deepfakes, content manipulation, and information integrity which the participants also cited.

The study will add to the literature and provide a foundation of enhancing the research method, especially because Kuwaitis make extensive use of social media platforms because of various reasons, one of which is the digital presence.

3. Methodology

This study employed a mixed method approach qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative approach used a focus group discussion (FGD) to explore user perceptions of Artificial Intelligence (AI) integration in social media platforms. This method was chosen for its ability to capture rich, in-depth insights into participants' experiences, attitudes, and ethical concerns regarding AI-enabled social media environments. In addition, the qualitative approach used a survey questionnaire to solicit users' opinions.

3.1. Qualitative Method

3.1.1. Focus Group and Sample

It used an exploratory qualitative design, which is appropriate in researching dynamic and multifaceted issues like the convergence of AI and social media. The use of the focus group approach was specifically suitable in terms of revealing the various attitudes and in terms of engaging in interactive deliberation on the perceived opportunities as well as risks of AI technologies. The participants have been chosen purposely (25 in total) and have to be diverse in terms of gender, age, education, and work experience. It was a cross-section of the social media users and it included students and employees across academic and administrative fields in Kuwait. The subjects were selected according to an active use of social media channels and experience with AI-based services including content recommendation, automated moderation, and tailored advertising.

3.1.2. Data Collection Procedure

The discussion took place in the face-to-face discussion format and took around 60 minutes in the focus group. The session was facilitated with the semi-structured discussion protocol consisting of the open-ended questions connected with: Awareness and understanding of AI in social media; Perceived benefits; Ethical issues; Gender-related differences in using and perceiving AI features; and Recommendations on more responsible and user-centric AI integration. The principal investigator moderated the session and was assisted by a trained observer who made field notes. The meeting was audio-taped with the consent of the participants to guarantee that their data were captured correctly. The study was given ethical approval by the concerned institutional review board. Informed consent was obtained and all the participants participated in the study.

3.1.3. Data Analysis

A verbatim transcript was made of the recorded discussion, and thematic analysis carried out, according to the procedures described in (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Data were coded manually and emergent themes identified in an iterative manner. The notable themes were grouped into sections like: functional value of AI, ethical risks and concerns, gender differences and user trust and control. This approach provided an opportunity to observe trends, contradictions and subtle observations that are pertinent to the objectives of a study.

3.2. Quantitative Method

3.2.1. Questionnaire Design and Sample:

A survey questionnaire will be designed to collect quantitative information. The questionnaire used consisted of the first section which focused on demographic factors and the following sections contained 5-point Likert-scale items and closed questions to understand the impressions of the users of the AI technologies as part of social media platforms. The paper targets people of various disciplines in Kuwait. The sampling was done using a stratified randomized sampling approach in order to ensure that the sample is diverse. Table 1 contains the sample that consists of 619 people that represent different age groups, gender, and different ways of using social media. The questionnaire is formulated by obtaining the opinions of the users on the opportunities and challenges presented by AI in social media, with specific reference to the awareness, benefits, concerns, and ethical issues concerning AI technologies. The most important variables will be awareness of users towards AI tools, perceived effectiveness, readiness to use AI in social media platform, and AI challenges.

Table 1. Sample distribution according to the demographic variables (619)

Variables		Frequency	Percent %
Gender	Male	186	30.0
	Female	433	70.0
Age	from 16-20	161	26.0
	from 21-30	402	64.9
	from 31-40	35	5.7
	more than 41	21	3.4
Usage	I do not use	31	5.0
	Between 1 to 2	138	22.3
	Between 3 to 5	239	38.6
	More than 5	211	34.1
Experience	Low	153	24.7
	Moderate	351	56.7
	High	115	18.6
Total		619	100%

3.2.2. Data Collection and Analysis:

Electronic surveys will be used on the user. The data collection method will be confidential and will encourage valid answers. To analyze quantitative survey data, descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation, were used. The correlation analysis was conducted to test the relationships between demographic factors and the perceptions of AI products by users of social media. The quantitative data were helpful in determining the significant patterns and differences in the opinions of students.

3.2.3. Validity and Reliability

The research tools were used to carry a pilot study to assess the questionnaire in meeting the intended goals, assess the viability of the survey and verify preliminary results. The statistical findings indicate that there are correlations between every item of the questionnaires and the sum of the questionnaire and the respective factor sums. These relationships are necessary when measuring the validity of the questionnaire especially its construct validity. All the items are substantially correlated, which means that there is significant construct validity, based on the correlations between the items and their factor totals plus the entire questionnaire. Nevertheless, the items with less correlations may be subject to additional analysis in order to prove their particular contribution to the component and the general objective of the survey.

The SPSS was used to compute the correlation coefficients. The correlations of the various aspects and the total score were statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). In the same manner, the reliability of the questionnaire was assessed by calculating the alpha of Cronbach with the help of SPSS. The degrees of the coefficient presented in Table 2 (ranging between 0.77 and 0.91) demonstrate the reliability of the dimensions of the questionnaire. The overall Cronbachs Alpha coefficient is 0.94. Consequently, it is possible to administer the questionnaire to the core sample to conduct a basic research, and the results obtained may be considered as credible.

Table 2. Reliability Statistics

	Group	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
A	Level of Knowledge about Artificial Intelligence	4	0.83
B	Expected Benefits of Artificial Intelligence	4	0.87
C	Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Social Media Platforms	7	0.91
D	Readiness or Future Engagement with AI	3	0.77

E	Challenges	7	0.85
Total		25	0.94

4. Results

To provide a thorough understanding of respondents' perceptions of AI technologies and their awareness of social media, this part combines both quantitative and qualitative findings. The results drawn from both data sources will be validated and supported by the triangulation procedure.

4.1. Qualitative Analysis

The transcription of the focus group discussion involving 25 participants showed that there were four key thematic areas in relation to perceptions of Artificial Intelligence (AI) integration in social media platforms: (1) perceived benefits and functional value, (2) ethical concerns and risks, (3) gender-based differences in awareness and interaction, and (4) trust and expectations of responsible AI governance. The acquired insights present a sensitive perception of the attitudes of the users in the context of Kuwait and depicted in Table 3.

4.1.1. Perceived Benefits and Functional Value of AI

Participants widely acknowledged the positive impact of AI on their social media experiences. AI-enabled personalization was identified as the most appreciated feature, especially in terms of relevant content suggestions, time-saving browsing, and platform engagement.

“AI knows what I like and shows me things I didn’t even know I needed. It makes my feed feel tailored to me.” (Female participant, 22)

Several participants appreciated AI’s role in content moderation and spam filtering, which they felt contributed to a cleaner and more relevant digital environment.

“Without AI filtering, social media would be full of nonsense and offensive content.” (Male participant, 33)

Additionally, some respondents working in marketing or small business expressed that AI-supported tools helped improve their content targeting and advertising performance.

4.1.2. Ethical Concerns and Perceived Risks

Most participants expressed concerns on privacy, surveillance and misuse of data, however, despite that the advantages were realized. A lot of users were not comfortable with the fact that they were having their personal details being collected and processed without their input and consent.

“I can hear AI spying on me everywhere... I simply had to search something one time, and all of a sudden that is all over my social media.” (Female participant, 29)

The issue of algorithmic manipulation and misinformation were also present. Being exposed to variety of opinions, the participants mentioned that AI occasionally strengthens biased content, or echo chambers, causing a skewed perception and narrow-mindedness.

I question sometimes whether or not I am dreaming, or just within the scope of what the algorithm desires me to dream. (Male participant, 40)

4.1.3. Gender-Based Differences in Awareness and Use

It was determined that female participants were more familiar with AI features and less prepared to accept the ethical concerns of AI than their male peers. Females frequently raised the questions concerning the emotional influence, internet security, and data privacy, especially in such areas as image recognition and facial information.

“AI filters and face recognition are a matter of concern to me, particularly when it stores your data on your face without your permission.” (Female participant, 24)

Men, in turn, were not that much concerned with the aesthetic worth and usefulness of AI and were not as likely to be intrigued about how the technology operates and what the long-term effects will be.

4.1.4. Trust, Transparency, and Expectations from Platforms

One such theme was that there was no transparency to the operations of AI systems. The participants noted that platforms were not doing a good job explaining to them what data they collect, how it is used, and how decisions are made by algorithms.

“I want to know what platforms are doing with our information with their AI. We can not see any definite policy.” (Male participant, 28)

The participants also had an interest in more user control over the way the algorithm behaves like being able to turn off personalization or manually create preferences. Most of them underlined the necessity of ethical norms and control, in particular, to safeguard vulnerable users and avoid manipulation.

Table 3: Summary of Key Findings

Theme	Key Insight
AI Functional Benefits	Personalization, content filtering, marketing assistance
Ethical Risks	Data privacy, surveillance, misinformation, lack of control
Gender Differences	Women expressed higher AI awareness and concern for privacy and safety
Trust and Expectations	Demand for transparency, user control, and responsible AI governance

4.2. Quantitative Analysis

The results of the survey that looks at students' opinions of possible advantages and difficulties associated with integrating AI in the classroom are described and analyzed in the following sections. Five sets of factors' statistical data are shown in Tables 4 through 8: *Level of Knowledge about AI, Expected Benefits of AI, perceived impact of AI on social media platforms, Readiness to use AI, and challenges related to AI use.*

4.2.1. Level of Knowledge about Artificial Intelligence

Based on the results presented in Table 4, the knowledge of the respondents about artificial intelligence was considered moderate in nature. Most of the participants had a basic understanding of what artificial intelligence (AI) is as seen by the highest-rated item (Mean = 3.43). The second place was occupied by the awareness of the use of AI technologies incorporated into social media (Mean = 3.37) which means that a person knows these tools due to daily online communication. Acquiring AI tools, in its turn, was rated third (Mean = 3.36), which means that there is a relatively low degree of exposure to AI capabilities. The lowest rated was the item with the lowest rating, which is having actual experience with the use of AI tools and applications (Mean = 3.30), which shows that even though respondents are aware of AI, they still have somewhat limited exposure to more general AI tools in practice. The standard deviations were also near 1.0, which indicates that the responses to all items fell within the agree range of the scale, meaning that the participants do not know much about AI.

Table 4. Level of Knowledge about Artificial Intelligence (Frequency)

NO	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	SD	Rank
1	I am aware of the concept of Artificial Intelligence.	65	245	233	44	32	3.43	0.953	1
2	I have learned how to use AI tools.	56	250	209	71	33	3.36	0.981	3
3	I have experience using AI tools and applications.	60	222	213	93	31	3.30	1.004	4
4	I have used AI tools that are applied within social media	65	243	189	97	25	3.37	1.000	2

4.2.2. Expected Benefits of Artificial Intelligence

Having all categories of final results of moderately high mean scores, Table 5 results suggest that respondents tend to perceive artificial intelligence products as helpful. The belief that AI tools could assist the user to obtain what they need quicker was the most endorsed advantage (Mean = 3.85), then it was closely succeeded by the opinion that the AI technologies simplified chores (Mean = 3.82). Also, the respondents (Mean = 3.78) admitted that AI tools are time- and effort-saving compared to other applications, which suggests a positive attitude to the efficiency-related asset of AI. The perception that AI technology enhances productivity in the workplace recorded the lowest, but still positive, score (Mean = 3.64). The distribution of answers concerning all subjects was skewed greatly towards the Agree and Strongly Agree options, with a minimal percentage of the respondents in the dislike category and the Strongly Do Not Like category, meaning there was a positive perception of AI usage in general. The results of the standard deviations range between 0.94 and 1.00 meaning that the respondents opinions are moderately divergent.

Table 5. Expected Benefits of Artificial Intelligence (Frequency)

NO	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	SD	Rank
1	AI tools can help simplify tasks.	141	298	126	34	20	3.82	0.954	1
2	AI tools can save me time and effort compared to	132	293	137	41	16	3.78	0.941	3
3	AI tools can help me obtain what I want more quickly.	153	287	136	21	22	3.85	0.950	2
4	AI tools can enhance the efficiency of my work.	115	268	158	55	23	3.64	1.002	4

4.2.3. Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Social Media Platforms

Having all the mean scores in the range between small and fairly high (3.613.70), the results presented in Table 6 prove that the respondents tend to believe that artificial intelligence positively affects social media platforms. The most rated item (Mean = 3.70) was the opinion that AI could improve the quality of social media content, which is a very favorable opinion towards AI-based innovations such as auto-moderation, personal recommendations, and improved media appearance. There was consistent agreement as the same scores were registered with other items including the ability of AI to enhance the quality of the platform (Mean = 3.66), change user interaction patterns (Mean = 3.66) and enhance engagement (Mean = 3.67). The idea of AI role in achieving more followers (Mean = 3.62) and considerably improving social media (Mean = 3.61) were recorded as slightly low yet positive. Most of the respondents answered "Agree" and strongly agree to each item with standard deviations of between 0.90 and 0.98 which represented a good level of agreement with an acceptable variation.

Table 6. Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Social Media Platforms (Frequency)

NO	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	SD	Rank
1	I believe AI applications can enhance the quality of	105	284	166	45	19	3.66	0.945	3
2	I believe AI applications can make social media	99	290	171	39	20	3.66	0.930	5
3	I believe AI contributes to increasing engagement on	107	278	178	37	19	3.67	0.933	2

4	I believe AI improves the quality of content on social	110	293	155	44	17	3.70	0.934	1
5	I believe AI applications help increase followers on	101	278	169	45	26	3.62	0.980	6
6	AI adds significant value to social media.	94	275	182	48	20	3.61	0.945	7
7	I believe AI applications change the way users	93	293	180	37	16	3.66	0.894	4

4.2.4. Future Engagement with Artificial Intelligence

The results in Table 7 indicate that there are generally good predictions to engage with artificial intelligence in the future although the degree of agreement also differs according to the topic. The statement that AI would profoundly transform social media applications received the highest score (Mean = 3.77), which suggests that participants are rather certain in the effects of AI in the future on the digital platform. Many respondents are open to understanding new skills related to AI, and the second position of readiness to learn and use AI tools on social media (Mean = 3.60) demonstrates it. The purpose of using AI tools specifically to increase followers was the least in terms of mean (Mean = 3.32) and the responses were found to be more dispersed in both the neutral and disagree categories. The standard deviations indicate moderate heterogeneity (0.926 to 1.085) particularly in personal aspirations related to growth of followers.

Table 7. Future Engagement with AI (Frequency)

NO	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	SD	Rank
1	I am willing to learn and use AI tools on social	98	286	159	43	33	3.60	1.008	2
2	I believe AI will play an important role in	125	298	144	35	17	3.77	0.926	1
3	I plan to use AI tools on social media to increase	84	207	183	111	34	3.32	1.085	3

4.2.5. Challenges with Artificial Intelligence

Table 8 shows that respondents also notice a series of considerable challenges associated with the use of artificial intelligence through social media platforms with mean scores ranging between 3.31 and 3.65. The data security and privacy were rated highest (Mean = 3.65), and this indicates that there is a great concern about how the systems AI-based systems collect, store and utilise personal data. The issues regarding ethics were also ranked high; the amount of consensus was substantial regarding the points of ethics in regards to AI adoption (Mean = 3.45) and the non-transparency in AI applications (Mean = 3.46). The issues that were related to cost, hard work, and the possibility of inaccurate outcomes scored lower, but still, not insignificant ratings, and they were 3.31 on average. Also, the respondents (Mean = 3.43) showed a moderate degree of agreement that AI could be helpful in the spread of fake information. The standard deviations of almost 0.94 and 0.99 indicate moderate variability because the prevalence of people expressing concern is generally the same, but individuals vary in the degree of concern.

Table 8. Challenges with AI (Frequency)

NO	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	SD	Rank
1	I have ethical concerns regarding the adoption of	77	236	219	60	27	3.45	0.976	3
2	The cost of AI applications and technologies	55	217	238	81	28	3.31	0.962	7

3	I have concerns about data security and privacy when	114	260	177	48	20	3.65	0.973	1
4	The difficulty of using AI technologies and	57	224	219	91	28	3.31	0.982	6
5	There is a lack of transparency when using	82	221	236	62	18	3.46	0.943	2
6	Using AI on social media platforms may lead to	65	208	228	91	27	3.31	0.991	5
7	Using AI on social media increases the spread of	72	226	235	68	18	3.43	0.934	4

5. Discussions

Findings of this paper show that the perception of AI in social media is rather intricate and multidimensional among consumers in Kuwait. The respondents showed a definite admiration of the functionality of AI in improving the user experience by using it to personalize content, provide targeted advertisements, and moderate in real-time. Such findings are in line with the earlier studies that highlight AI as a transformative factor in digital interactions. Benabdelouahed et al. (2020) emphasized the effectiveness and possibilities of AI in the formation of user-oriented social media space, whereas Elsir and Badur (2024) also evidenced that AI algorithms are much more effective in delivering content based on user behavior and preferences. The convenience-enabling aspect of AI was seen by many participants, which also enables curated and relevant content, as well as is also echoed on a global scale as Bughin et al. (2017) suggest this to be the next digital frontier due to its ability to optimize the engagement and decision-making process. On the same note, Qaruty et al. (2023) focused on the concept of AI and social media integration, which defines how the two concepts can provide an additional opportunity in the realm of communication, marketing, and data intelligence, which correlates with the fact that participants valued AI-driven functions like content suggestions and business analytics.

Nonetheless, this appreciation of utility comes with serious ethical issues. The participants also were concerned about their privacy, surveillance, and the transparency of algorithms and abuse of personal information, which is substantially reflected in the literature. The extensive bibliometric and qualitative analysis that Saheb et al. (2024) offered demonstrated that users are increasingly dissatisfied with algorithmic decision-making, abuse of data, and manipulation of content in the AI-based setting. Similarly, Whittaker et al. (2018) cautioned about the effects of unregulated AI growth, which included inaccurate information, institutionalized discrimination, and loss of agency by users. In addition, Brundage et al. (2020) cautioned that AI in social media will enhance misinformation, manipulate users, and strengthen algorithmic biases.

Suspicion towards transparency on platforms became a popular theme as well. Respondents regularly referred to AI as a black box, in which users do not know how decisions are arrived at. This strengthens the sentiments by Grandinetti (2021), who discussed the fact that AI is deeply embedded into social networks like Facebook and Tik Tok and discovered that users do not necessarily know how their platforms work. Lack of meaningful consent or proper governance practices increases the risk that users are exposed to, which is reflected in the findings of Faraasyatul 'Alam et al. (2024), who point out that powerful models of governance and ethical standards should guide the implementation of AI.

The findings were also complicated by gender-based differences. Women showed more awareness of AI risks as well as more ethical concerns, especially when it comes to privacy, the use of biometric data, and emotions. These conclusions are consistent with those provided by Papadakis (2022), who discovered that females (particularly instructors) were more likely to demonstrate a grievance regarding the psychological and social consequences of new technologies. In the meantime, men respondents paid more attention to convenience and practicality, and they did not pay much attention to long-term risks. The dynamic is aligned with bigger research findings like Pendy (2023) and Joshi et al. (2021), who also observe gendered dissimilarity in the

adoption of technology and the perception of risk. The demands of the participants to provide more transparency and user control is correlated with Zhang et al. (2018) who recommended the development of user-centered digital ecosystems with the understanding of user trust, autonomy, and preferences.

The quantitative findings also indicated that despite the fact that users have a rather high level of awareness of AI concepts, their practical knowledge and working experience are still low. This is consistent with the world trends where people interact with AI primarily in passive ways, e.g., social media algorithms and automatic recommendations, but not in the form of direct training or any formal education programs. The disparity between theoretical knowledge and practice skillfulness, which is reflected in the lower scores of real AI tools use, explains the urgency of AI literacy programs. This will align with the literature on education that focuses on the need to have specific training to convert familiarity into practical capability (Faraasyatul 'Alam et al., 2024; Joshi et al., 2021).

It was also discovered that they strongly believed in the applicability of AI tools to improve task efficiency, speed, and convenience. The users treasured the instantaneousness, flexibility, and the capability of AI to simplify processes, which is consistent with the overall world analyses of AI use. These results are quite consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), according to which, the perceived usefulness has been identified as one of the best predictors of behavioral intention. This indicates that users in Kuwait are willing to have further assimilation of AI into their online lives as long as proper training and support structures exist. The participants also perceived AI as an influential force that transforms social media experience in various ways, including: engagement, interactions, and the quality of content as Dwivedi et al. (2021) show. These attitudes are based on the studies that show the ability of AI to improve the real-time content moderation, trend detection, and personalization (Zhang et al., 2018; Bughin et al., 2017). Although users recognized that AI enhanced the quality of the platform, they still doubted its effectiveness to increase the number of followers or generate the regular added value on all platforms. These ambivalent perceptions support the necessity of digital literacy courses that could assist users in learning about the behavior of the algorithms, possible bias, and the use of artificial intelligence in a responsible manner.

Lastly, the results demonstrated underlying fears related to issues of ethics, privacy, and transparency that were carefully brought out in previous studies. Jobin, Ienca, and Vayena (2020) upheld this point with references to the inconsistency in AI ethics guidelines on the global front and the fact that different operationalization leads to confusion among users and decreased trust. These issues are very much in line with the views created in the focus groups of this study. The concerns of the users regarding surveillance, black-box data practices, and misinformation are replicas of the international discourse on algorithmic bias, deepfakes, and data exploitation. These views are consistent with those of Saheb et al. (2024), Sadiku et al. (2021), and Whittaker et al. (2018), who stress that AI-enabled settings should have a strong governance, protection of users, and ethical framework. The literature and existing evidence both indicate that the process of improving the user trust will necessitate the adoption of transparent policies in the platform, explicit communication on the functions of AI, and enhance the user control over digital experiences. As Mitchell et al. (2022) have highlighted, AI systems are not always transparent and may easily undermine the autonomy and trust of the users.

6. Implications and Future Directions

The findings show that AI continues to have an increasingly significant impact on the online experiences of social media users in Kuwait, offering meaningful opportunities of personalization, efficiency and content control, and at the same time introduce complex ethical and social issues. The results suggest that social media companies need to encourage algorithmic decision-making transparency and improve communication with regard to data collection and use. Policymakers and regulators should consider establishment of governing frameworks that would safeguard users against invasion of privacy, biased flow of content, and controlling digital ecosystems. The gender gaps identified above suggest that the need to introduce inclusive AI literacy programs that consider the varying degrees of awareness and ethical concerns is important. Future studies can examine how AI awareness changes over time due to the development of platforms and the introduction of new generative AI technologies. More comprehensive studies would allow expanding this investigation to other

countries of the Gulf region to determine whether user trust and perceived threats are influenced by cultural or demographic differences. Further, experimental, and behavioral research could clarify the response of users to AI-based personalization and determine the extent to which transparency features or controls by the user would help reduce the fears related to surveillance and algorithm bias.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

The results of this study indicate that users in Kuwait have positive statements about the significant advantages of AI in enhancing individualization, efficiency, and interaction on the social media platforms, but they also have significant concerns related to privacy, transparency, and ethical implications. These issues require a complex approach that will increase the awareness of AI and all the population by introducing educational programs and integrating AI-focused courses into academic and national digital initiatives. It is necessary to increase transparency and user control, which forces social media to disclose algorithmic activities, offer alternatives to personalization, and provide on-demand warnings regarding the use of data. In order to increase the trust of the users, national authorities should develop ethical and legal standards that align with world privacy and fairness standards and encourage the use of explainable AI models and technologies to help users detect manipulated or AI-generated information. Based on the gender-related differences depicted in terms of ethical sensitivity, there is an urgent need to introduce specific training that would target the concerns of women, particularly regarding privacy, emotional well-being, and biometric data, as well as contributing to equal access to AI capacity-building programs. Finally, collaboration between social media corporations, academic institutions, and government agencies, including ethical oversight boards to develop AI is needed to ensure responsible, safe, and people-centered AI implementation. Together, these approaches will be able to align positive perceptions of AI benefits with worries by users to foster a more trustworthy, open, and inclusive digital environment.

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8. References

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