Use of social media by LIS students in Kuwait and Taiwan: A comparative analysis

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Abstract. Over the years, social media (SM) has gained much credibility among students, and educational institutions are leveraging it in their systems. From the educational standpoint, SM influences students to learn course information, contact peers and develop new skills. The study aims to identify the students' use of SM to access information related to the Library and Information Science (LIS) programmes in Kuwait and Taiwan, including time spent, tools used, reasons and patterns of use, and to indicate the challenges faced in providing means of LIS learning and collaboration. In total, 288 valid questionnaires were received from students in both countries. Descriptive analysis from the respondents revealed data on the participants' demography. The thematic analysis showed the results of the SM platforms' usage, hours spent, and messaging frequency. The ordinal scale provided further data on SM use in LIS education. Results from those who responded show frequent use, high GPAs, and social and entertainment purposes. Both countries respondents show similar usage and attitudes towards SM in LIS education, exchanging collaborative learning and integrating creativity and innovation. Taiwan respondents have a higher female student population, while Kuwait has a balanced gender distribution. Taiwanese students spend less time on social media (SM) daily for LIS information and prefer different platforms. Kuwaiti student respondents dedicate more time to SM and positively perceive its potential to improve grades.

Keywords: Use of social media, LIS use of social media, library and information science, Kuwait, Taiwan, LIS students

1. Introduction

The fast growth of Web 2.0 technologies over the years has changed the behaviour of students around the world. Among the technologies, social media (SM) has gained much impetus as an open-source platform for sharing information. What attracts people to SM usage is its accessibility, communication, participation, cooperation, and connection, which are geographically diverged [1]. SM develops students' ability to create and inspire their interests in educational subjects [2]. It has engaged the students to interact daily, communicate and learn [3,4]. SM applications help develop students' learning and improve instructor communication [5–7]. Keasberry [8] explored the impact of SM usage on students' learning, such as student knowledge, and making learning efficient.

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Due to the distinctive character of the discipline and the specific goals of LIS professionals and institutions, the environment of social media usage in LIS education can differ dramatically from that in other specific education sectors. However, SM use in LIS education is driven by the field's need for organising information, assisting users, and expanding knowledge. In LIS education, students can use SM to record class lectures, document observations, and analyse data [9]. Not only students are heavy social media users, but teachers have also increasingly depended on SM tools [10]. However, there are fears that SM may be a disturber of education [11]. Increasing or heavy use of mobile phones and SM have been demonstrated to be negatively associated with undergraduate student's academic performance in Kuwait [12,13], Taiwan [14,15], Spain [16] and the US [17].

Academic institutions are leveraging the potential of SM to augment the educational process. As access to digital technology is ubiquitous, SM is gaining more momentum, and over the past few years, its applications have become indispensable resources for education in university course settings. This study aims to identify the university student's use of SM to access information related to the Library and Information Science (LIS) programmes in Kuwait and Taiwan and map out the challenges to providing LIS learning and collaboration through this use. To this end, a survey approach is used to investigate the perspectives of the students from both countries on their usage patterns of SM and its effectiveness in enhancing LIS education. Moreover, the motivation and impact underlying using such platforms for accessing LIS information are also explored.

1.1. Kuwait and Taiwan

Geographically, Taiwan is located in East Asia, and Kuwait is in the Middle East. The official language of Kuwait is Arabic. English is spoken widely and has been used in education as a second language since elementary school. In Taiwan, people speak Mandarin and English was introduced into the high school curriculum in the 1980s.

Conservative societal ideals and customs define Kuwaiti culture. The official religion of Kuwait is Islam, and the legislation and social values are governed by it. Similarly, the Taiwanese culture is conservative and places the family at the centre of its cultural activities [18]. Area-wise, Taiwan is double the size of Kuwait, and its population is five times larger than Kuwait's.

In terms of GDP per capita, Kuwait's GDP is a little higher. Regarding Internet use in Kuwait, it is 99 per cent, and in Taiwan, it is 91 per cent [19]. In both countries, public education is free and obligatory. However, it extends to tertiary education in Kuwait and Junior high school in Taiwan, in which a diverse choice of courses are provided to meet the student's needs, as well as practical sessions that equip them with an idea of future vocational and technical education and employment options [20]. LIS education is offered only in two public institutions in Kuwait, at the bachelor's (BA) level and the master's (MA) level. In Taiwan, seven LIS schools cover BA, MA and PhD programmes offered by four national universities and three private universities (see Table 1).

One of the other reasons that encouraged the implementation of this research in Kuwait and Taiwan is the similarity of the number of students in their LIS programmes. In 2021, 1856 students (including 1460 BA and 396 MA) enrolled in the seven LIS schools in Taiwan. The figure is almost the same for only two LIS schools in Kuwait as of 2021, the BA (1800 enrolled students) and master's programme of Information Studies (MISt) (50 enrolled students) in the two LIS schools in Kuwait.

Table 1
LIS education offerings in Kuwait and Taiwan

Kuwait LIS Universities	LIS programme level
College of Basic Education (CBE), PAAET	BA
College of Social Sciences, Kuwait University	BA minor, MA
Taiwan LIS Universities	LIS programme level
National Taiwan University	BA, MA, PhD
National Taiwan Normal University	BA, MA, PhD
National Chengchi University	BA, MA, PhD
National Chung Hsing University	MA
Fu Jen Catholic University	BA, MA
Tamkang University	BA, MA
Shin Hsin University	BA, MA

1.2. SM penetration in Kuwait and Taiwan

SM dissemination in the two countries is almost the same: in Kuwait, it's 93 per cent, and in Taiwan, it's 90 per cent [19]. There was 98 per cent Internet usage in Kuwait, with 4,227,000 Facebook subscribers in March 2021. In Taiwan, 92.4 per cent of Internet usage was reported in June 2021, with 20,610,000 Facebook users [21]. The purpose of using social media-based platforms ranged from sharing information, acquiring education, and having fun.

Regarding educational use of social media, students use it for collaborative work, facilitating ubiquitous learning and contacting their teachers [6]. Further, in both countries, the majority of the users of SM are dominated by millennia. Regarding gender parity, Kuwait is one of the Middle Eastern countries that recognise women more for their rights in the constitution, including political and educational rights [22]. New technologies allow women to strengthen their societal participation [22,23]. On the other hand, Taiwan ranks top in Asia for gender parity. Taiwan passed an Act in 2004 known as the Gender Equity Education Act; this has significantly helped women to progress in their desired fields. Both countries need more support in budget allocation, leading to an insufficient style of education, which, in turn, affects learning, collaboration and skills development.

In Kuwait, SM use has increased considerably over the past few years due to the availability of Internet access and Information Communication Technologies (ICT) (such as smartphones and their applications, automated systems, web 3.0 and WI-FI). However, factors inhibiting SM use in Kuwait are more university encouragement and time [13,24]. A similar phenomenon of the widespread, daily usage of SM was observed among university students in Taiwan [25], where students were found to use SM more conveniently [26]. The collaboration of students with the ICT and SM tools assisted them in gaining knowledge for academic purposes [6,27] and also helped them in future employment [10]. ICT knowledge moderated the association between SM and student performance [27].

Teachers also consider using SM tools beneficial in instructing students [10,12]. However, Kuo et al. [26] believe that although SM benefits the students' learning performance, it may sometimes lead to the risk of addiction and consequently impact their academic achievements. Students have been warned, however, to use social media conscientiously [28].

Although research on SM is increasing [29], literature on the use of SM in education from the perspective of LIS students is limited [3,24]. Few studies discuss the LIS student's use of SM in learning

and teaching [30]. None has compared Kuwait with Taiwan and pointed out the challenges and the leverage of SM to facilitate collaborative learning. Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap by exploring the suitability of applying SM in LIS formal education at Kuwait and Taiwan's BA and MA levels. The findings of this study help understand the students' use of SM in both countries concerning LIS education and map out the challenges of providing LIS learning and collaboration through this use.

2. Literature review

Since the advent of Web 2.0, many SM tools have existed. SM applications were initially created and developed to establish social communication, not for learning purposes [31]. However, educators can acquire SM as an appropriate tool for teaching and learning purposes [30], significantly enhancing interactions between academics and their students [6,32]. As Al-Khalifa and Garcia [33] highlighted, SM tools and techniques provide a medium to share ideas and allow students to build their communities to collaborate. Over the years, SM has become more credible as an intelligence source and a medium for trustworthy organisational interactions [32]. In recent years, it has been revealed that educational institutions apply SM tools and techniques to their programmes and use group tools and processes to enhance their students' learning. The use of SM in academic domains allows students to obtain more critical knowledge and connect with other educational systems and learning groups, consequently enhancing the convenience of education [34].

Alwagait et al. [35] surveyed the usage of SM and its impact on the academic performance of students in Saudi Arabia. Their findings were contradictory to the results of the study conducted by Talaue et al. [4]; it was revealed that no linear relationship existed between the GPA scores obtained and the use of SM in a week [35]. The findings suggested that apart from using social media, time management plays a crucial role in impacting the scores of the students detrimentally [13,35]. From all the studies on SM and academic performance discussed in this section, mixed results showed that SM could positively [27] and negatively affect students' academic performance [5,36].

2.1. SM use and academic performance

Social networking sites (SNS) have brought people together like never before [37]. SNS have diffused college students' lives internationally [38]. It is freely available; students only need a device and a connection to access the SNS [29]. The question of how SM affects students is an urgent need for educators and researchers and deserves more exploration [39]. Various studies reveal that SM can have more detrimental impacts on the academic lives of young individuals and can consequently impact the students' careers negatively [40] due to the immense consumption of time [13,24,41,42]. As suggested by Wakil et al. [42], the overuse of SM is often known to reduce students' performance. A similar study at the University of Hong Kong found that the usage of SM for academic purposes failed to be a significant predictor of it [2]. Doleck et al. [38] stated that the relationship between SM and academic performance has not been studied yet, or little has been known about it [2].

Mao [43] has also proved that entertaining, sharing pictures, and getting updated resources for schoolwork are the fundamental reasons for SM use, while collaborating on projects and learning a new subject are the least cited reasons for SM use. On the other hand, numerous studies highlighted the increasing educational benefits of SM in students' lives [26,43]. For example, Abrahim et al. [44] found that most research participants agreed that Facebook offered great promises to facilitate their English language learning and improve their motivation and confidence. Moreover, SM also had a significant

impact on students' grade points. Lau [2] identified a positive effect on student's academic performances of applications such as Twitter. The study's findings revealed that the use of Twitter enhanced the commitment levels of the students and that they had a higher GPA than those who did not use it.

Contrastingly, Al-Menayes [12] and Tafesse [36] found that SM use negatively affects students' GPAs. Another study by Lambic [7] involved a survey on the correlation between the educational use of Facebook and students' academic performance. The findings portrayed a positive relationship between the two [36,42,44]. With the frequency of Facebook use for educational purposes [44,45], Lederer [46] suggested that students have become accustomed to a world where SM use has become necessary. SM enriches the educational experience by exchanging ideas among students and their educators, raises collaboration [5,47] and debate, and engages networks using evolving social platforms. SNS can assist students in improving their academic performance, preparing for competitive tests, expanding their learning and research capacities [37], interacting with researchers, reading research content and knowing its trends [28]. Talaue et al. [4] revealed that although SM has become an indispensable part of student's lives and consumes almost all of their free time, certain aspects of SM offer essential benefits for the development of the students [38]; communication through SM can enhance students' socialisation [7], their critical thinking, and discussions [46]. Furthermore, SM efficiently increases students' engagement and communication skills [7,46].

SM among university students, traditionally heavy users, has become essential today. SM multitasking has been growing prevalent [2,17]. The heavy SM usage among undergraduates and its impact on their university performance was studied by Kasa et al. [48], who found that a large proportion of students in a Nigerian University were addicted to social media for academic objectives. WhatsApp were the most addictive [40,48], and unexpectedly, those between the ages of 27 and 30 were the most obsessed. Osharive [49] assessed Lagos students in terms of academic performance. The findings suggested that several students were addicted to SM usage within the university premises. In this regard, the research indicated that SM should be employed for educational requirements, extending social networking platforms, creating new pages to improve learning activity, and monitoring must be conducted by teachers and parents on how the students use these sites. However, specialised awareness programs can be developed to highlight the dangers of social media addiction and to pave the path for students to balance their usage of social media platforms with academic activity [48].

From all the previous studies, it can be observed that SM significantly impacts students' academic performances. These impacts can be both positive and harmful [5,42]. Long durations of usage of SM platforms can result in distractions and reduced academic performance [42], whereas optimal use of SM applications for study purposes can enhance academic performance.

2.2. SM use and applications

According to the Arab SM report [50], SM was generally used in the region by students to connect. However, the other purposes for which SM employed were seeking information, watching videos, listening to music, and sharing photos. A study in Kuwait confirmed that students use mobile devices for accessing information. It highlighted that using social media allows faculty and students to interact, meet peers, and become acquainted [29]. Academics in Kuwait reported that SM use on Twitter and Facebook received the highest social use, followed by WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube [24,41]. At the same time, another research suggested that due to the inaccessibility of mobile phone user-friendly databases, students spend more time on SM or retrieving unorganised/unauthorised information [13]. Furthermore, Mansour [41] asserted that faculty members adopt SM mainly for connecting formally and informally with each other,

searching and sharing information with colleagues and students, and posting messages. Faculty members also reported that "keeping in touch" was the most frequent activity and used SM more often for informal academic communication [24].

However, Fedock et al. [51] believe that online higher education representatives should review their job statements to reflect how SM use may affect students' learning, profession, and career opportunities. Identically, as Otu [40] observed, most students used their SM accounts for entertainment. Apart from this, in the Arab world, SM has helped people to stay connected, network and collaborate [3].

Concerning the different mediums for SM interactions, it was observed that Instagram could ease communication while producing ideas, disseminating an event, attracting followers, contacting the right audience, and promoting a workshop [29]. Al-Daihani [52] further suggests that educators and academic librarians must consider planning activities using Twitter as an information and communication source. Moreover, Skype can be used to bring subject experts geographically together. In the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries, Facebook has become an excellent application for sharing course materials [45]. YouTube has been used extensively to provide comprehensive LIS subject materials [3,45].

Additionally, SM has attracted immense faculty attention and is an educational tool for fast and effective communication [7,32]. However, without a structured change process, teachers may not embrace using SM sites as practical teaching tools [51]. The applicability and efficiency of using SM applications were assessed through the perceptions of the teachers and students [35]. To enhance SM usage in the educational domain, the students and teachers revealed that smartphones are the most suitable devices. Further, the study found WhatsApp the most relevant application teachers and students use for teaching and learning. Otu [40] reported similar findings. Sobaih et al. [6] conducted a study to evaluate the use of SM by students for academic purposes. Their findings indicated that SM positively impacts academic-related objectives like learning and teaching tools [27,45]. However, the faculty's actual use of these SM platforms was minimal.

2.3. SM in education

Social media is used in LIS education to facilitate professional networking [37], cooperation [1], sharing of ideas, research findings [24], and best practices, creating a strong sense of community. SM platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, and professional Facebook groups develop professional growth [45,53], information literacy and digital citizenship skills. Thus, LIS specialists can help users learn how to evaluate online sources critically [44] and utilise social media responsibly. It is also crucial to incorporate social media into library services [54], with sites like Facebook and Twitter promoting resources and events [55]. Overall, social media is used in LIS education for various objectives, including accessing information [45].

SM has enabled people to learn on almost any topic related to knowledge and education [42,50]. SM has eased collaboration between students and professionals, bringing together peers with similar interests [3,5]. Students' academic performance is associated with using SM, which helps retrieve information and encourages innovation [42]. Consequently, this has a significant favourable influence on SM in the diffusion of new knowledge [27]. LIS students use social media for academic reasons and have a good attitude. They frequently utilise these platforms to communicate theoretical knowledge [27,42] with one another through various organisations [45].

Rising levels of activities within the educational domain have increased the motivations for SM use; this, in turn, increases the results of successful outcomes such as career development [53]. Therefore,

academics should raise awareness pertaining to the usefulness of SM as an information source [49,52,54]. They must integrate SM in teaching and course description, enhancing students' participation and linking their learning to employment [10]. In their research study, Xu et al. [47] assessed the application of the SM platform WeChat within the top thirty-nine Chinese libraries. The findings indicated that several Chinese libraries had implemented the WeChat SM application as a marketing tool to promote the services and collections for the users. The primary uses of WeChat include automatic interaction, answering features and social networking services features.

Very few research studies have discussed the faculty use of SNS [41] and SM applications to encourage the marketing of information resource use at academic libraries [54] and public libraries [55]. The use and scope of SM in LIS Education have yet to be explored to their full potential. Moreover, no study has been conducted per the researchers' knowledge that aims to examine the students' use and views regarding the implications of SM in accessing LIS information. Therefore, the current study intends to fill this research gap and add more information to the existing literature in this domain. The research aims to identify students' use of SM in Taiwan and Kuwait concerning LIS education and map out the issues pertinent to providing LIS learning and collaboration through SM applications. The study's rationale is to learn more about how students in Kuwait and Taiwan use social media (SM) while studying library and information science (LIS). Moreover, to investigate how students in these two nations use social media platforms for learning and cooperation in the LIS sector. The research, therefore, will answer the following questions:

(1) What is the respondents' SM engagement with LIS information concerning time spent and messages sent/received daily?
(2) What are the extent, frequency, and reasons for social media usage among responding students?
(3) What are LIS student reponder's social media learning patterns?

3. Methodology

Data were collected from the students at the LIS schools (at the BA and MA levels) in Kuwait and Taiwan (see Table 1) in March 2020. The students' ages in both countries are typical of a BA and MA students' age range. The average age for students enrolled in a four-year BA programme is 18 to 22. MA programmes usually run for one to two years; the median student age range is 22 to 27. In both countries, students can be older for different reasons, like educational systems, entry requirements, individual preferences and circumstances, and academic paths can affect the age range of students pursuing their degrees.

The survey responses were solicited from the total enrolled students, in Kuwait and Taiwan. The self-selected sampling technique was employed. It may represent students with higher motivation and access to resources who seek information outside formal education [56]. The response rate is 8% (from 3656 students in Kuwait and Taiwan), with 288 returned questionnaires from both countries. The returned surveys were 163 (57 per cent) from Kuwait and 125 (43 per cent) from Taiwan.

4. Data collection

The study collected the data through a structured survey based on earlier relevant research [3]. The researchers piloted the Arabic survey on the students in Kuwait and the Chinese on those in Taiwan. The participants came from the same educational background and two cultures and had SM access to the research sample. The survey was reworded and structured in Arabic and Chinese versions, and changes

were made where relevant. It was then emailed to the students in LIS schools in Kuwait and Taiwan. Informed consent was sought from all the targeted students before the data collection. The survey was administered in four ways in the two different countries, as follows:

(1) In Kuwait, the survey was shared through the department LIS official accounts on Twitter and Instagram. In Taiwan, the survey link was shared on the Facebook accounts of the seven LIS schools.
(2) The survey link was shared through LINE (for Taiwan) and WhatsApp (for Kuwait) groups where LIS students from one grade within one university communicate.
(3) The survey link was distributed to the seven LIS schools in Taiwan to forward the survey information to their students.
(4) The survey link was also distributed to LIS academics in Kuwait and Taiwan to forward (via email or social media) to the students enrolled in their classes.
(5) The survey setting was limited to accepting answers from respondents of the participating organisations (departments of participating colleges/universities) with one response per respondent to avoid duplication.

5. Results and discussion

The primary objective of this study was to understand the respondent's SM use patterns and access to LIS information in Kuwait and Taiwan; the following are the study's preliminary results.

Of the students who participated in the survey (288), 163 (57 per cent) from Kuwait and 125 (43 per cent) from Taiwan are frequent users of social media. Most students are females; 94 (58 per cent) are from Kuwait, and 99 (79 per cent) are from Taiwan. Most of the respondents (83 per cent) in both countries have a high GPA equivalent to grade B and above. Most of them spend less than two hours daily accessing LIS information, Kuwait ($N = 79$, 49 per cent) and Taiwan ($N = 105$, 84 per cent). Although the association between SM use and academic performance is unclear [2,26,33,39], it has been proved that a lower GPA positively correlates with excessive social media use [12,57].

Many Kuwaiti ($N = 56$, 34 per cent) and Taiwanese ($N = 46$, 30 per cent) respondents sent/received more than 25 messages daily. This finding is on par with the results of a study conducted by Mao [38]. However, only 15 per cent ($N = 44$ of 288 total Kuwait and Taiwan students) of the students of both countries reported sending/receiving less than five messages daily. They also reported using SM mainly for entertainment [40], social communications, and other social activities like chatting with friends and finding social events, which aligns with previous literature results [1,17]. It is, therefore, difficult to ascertain the time they use for academic pursuits. The results do not reveal the respondent's beliefs regarding SM's importance or usage level, in line with Lau [2].

Further, responses on the frequently used SM tools, in general, indicate that WhatsApp ($N = 130$, 23 per cent) in Kuwait, aligned with Al-Daihani et al. [24], and Line ($N = 122$, 25 per cent) in Taiwan were the most common. The results indicate that respondents use SM extensively [1,34], and many attribute their academic failure to it [12,26,42].

It is encouraging to boost their use within the students' daily activities [45]. Respondents in Taiwan concider Facebook an accessible medium to contact other students, share information or follow their achievements [1,3,17] matched this result.

Interestingly, the first uses of SM for educational purposes were to follow LIS events and to get updated with the field [49]. Moreover, Twitter ($N = 118$, 23 per cent) headed the use of SM to access LIS departments' information in Kuwait [41,52], while Facebook ($N = 102$, 20 per cent) prevailed in

Taiwan. The reason is that the LIS departments in Kuwait use Twitter [41,52], and Taiwan uses Facebook as their official SM medium, supporting Aftab [3] and Al-Daihani et al. [24] that Facebook and Twitter have become powerful tools for sharing course materials and marketing library materials [54,55]. The findings corroborate with previous literature [3,11,52] that SM has engaged students in general daily to communicate and learn [5,11,43].

The top-ranked LIS area the respondents agreed they used SM for is "collaborating in learning" (rank 1 out of fifteen SM use areas), similar to the result of AlHajri et al. [5] and Talaue et al. [4]. Encouragingly, the "deteriorating your grades" (rank 15) area received the lowest score for SM use in LIS education, aligned with Al-Menayes [12]. However, Kuo et al. [26] recommended educating students to control the use of SM in suitable ways to earn better academic results. The results show that the LIS community has an optimistic approach toward SM use in LIS education, contradicting the negative perception of it [52].

The study's findings pertaining to the use of SM tools in LIS education suggested that in modern times, students use SM to support their academic needs, in line with the research conducted by Lau [2], AlHajri et al. [5], Keasberry [8] Aftab and Sobih et al., [6] Nagi et al., [34] and Atikuzzaman [45].

In the context of LIS education, it was found that the other top-ranked SM areas used in LIS education in Kuwait and Taiwan were "posting departmental updates and events" (rank 2), "providing online learning" (rank 3), "providing a collaborative environment" (rank 4), and "Interacting with peers" (rank 5). However, the use of SM can be enhanced in other areas of LIS like "learning from peers" (rank 14), "communicating with faculty about coursework" (rank 13), and "providing LIS feedback from faculty members" (rank 12), and "Improving your grades" (rank 12).

The respondents chose "extremely agree" or "agree" to express that they would use all the areas mentioned in their LIS education. It is essential to train the students on the best SM practices applied in education to increase the use of social media [5,10,32]. Beforehand, Institutions should provide faculty members with hands-on training [13,24,52], enriching their understanding of SM uses to incorporate it into their research and teaching [6,24,51] and learning [6,11,49].

6. Key findings

The following are the critical findings for respondents by country, comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences between Kuwait and Taiwan in terms of social media (SM) use patterns and access to Library and Information Science (LIS) information:

6.1. Similarities

(1) Frequency of SM use: Both Kuwait (57%) and Taiwan (43%) have a significant proportion of respondents who frequently use social media, indicating a strong presence of SM usage in both countries.
(2) High GPA respondents: Most students in both countries (83%) have a high GPA equivalent to grade B and above, suggesting that high-achieving respondents actively use SM.
(3) Daily SM use for LIS Information: Most respondents in Kuwait (49%) and Taiwan (84%) spend less than two hours daily accessing LIS-related information through SM.
(4) SM Use for Entertainment: respondents in both countries primarily use SM for entertainment, social communication, and other social activities, such as chatting with friends and finding social events.
(5) Frequently Used SM Tools: WhatsApp is a commonly used SM tool in Kuwait (23%), while Line is famous in Taiwan (25%). Facebook and Twitter are also widely used in both countries.

(6) Optimistic Attitude Towards SM in LIS Education: Both Kuwait and Taiwan respondents have an optimistic attitude towards using SM in LIS education, ranking "collaborating in learning" as the top area for SM use.

6.2. Differences

(1) Gender Distribution: Kuwait has a higher percentage of male students (42%) than Taiwan (21%). In Taiwan, most students (79%) are female.
(2) Hours Spent on SM: Kuwaiti respondents tend to spend more time on SM, with 29% spending 5–6 hours daily, while Taiwanese respondents spend less time, with 45% spending 2–4 hours daily.
(3) Messages Sent/Received: Kuwaiti respondents (34%) are more active in sending/receiving more than 25 messages daily than Taiwanese respondents (30%).
(4) SM Tools for Accessing LIS Info: Kuwaiti respondents predominantly use Twitter (37%) to access LIS department information, whereas Taiwanese respondents rely on Facebook (45%).
(5) SM Use for Improving Grades: Kuwaiti respondents show a positive attitude (55%) towards using SM to improve their grades, while Taiwanese respondents (4%) are less inclined.
(6) Cultural Differences: Kuwait has Arabic as its official language, while Taiwan has Mandarin. Kuwait has a conservative culture influenced by Islam, while Taiwan is also conservative but strongly emphasises family.
(7) Introduction of English: Kuwait has used English as a second language in education since elementary school, whereas Taiwan introduced English into the high school curriculum in the 1980s.
(8) Age Range: While the typical age range for BA and MA students is 18 to 27, students in both countries can be older due to various factors affecting their educational paths.

These findings suggest that SM plays a significant role in students' academic lives in Kuwait and Taiwan, with some variations in usage patterns and cultural contexts. Both countries see potential benefits in SM use for LIS education, but there are also areas where further enhancement is needed, such as learning from peers and communicating with faculty. Training for students and faculty is recommended to enhance the use of SM in education.

7. Conclusion

The study compared social media (SM) use patterns and access to Library and Information Science (LIS) information among student responders to a survey in Kuwait and Taiwan. Both countries have a high percentage of frequent SM users, with 57% in Kuwait and 43% in Taiwan. Both student response groups use SM for social and entertainment purposes. Message frequency is similar, with a significant percentage sending/receiving more than 25 messages daily. Both countries share an optimistic attitude towards SM use in LIS education. However, Kuwait has a more balanced gender distribution, with a higher percentage of female students. Taiwan has a higher rate of responders who spend less than two hours daily accessing LIS information on SM. Kuwaiti responders spend more hours on SM daily, while Taiwanese responders prefer Line and Facebook. The study emphasises the need for tailored approaches to SM integration into education, considering the unique contexts of each country.

The main finding of this study is that, while there are certain parallels between Kuwait and Taiwan's SM use patterns and attitudes towards SM in LIS education, there are also significant variances driven by cultural, educational, and linguistic factors. Understanding these distinctions is essential for educators and

institutions looking to utilise SM in LIS education. The study also emphasises the necessity for specific strategies for SM integration into education, considering each country's distinctive settings. Additional research and investigation, using stratified random samples (versus self-selected sampling) could provide deeper insights and guidance for creating best practices for global SM use in LIS education.

8. Research limitation

The study was limited to self-selected responses from LIS students in Kuwait and Taiwan. The participants' self-selection may have impacted the sample's representativeness and the reliability of comparisons, representing only some of the population of LIS students. A random sampling strategy is required to provide a reliable and valid analysis of SM's adoption, Influence, and Sociocultural factors among LIS student populations in Kuwait and Taiwan. This study also suggests potential research involves faculty members' views on incorporating SM into their teaching practices.

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