

Marketing academic library information services using social media

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine the use of social media in the marketing of academic library resources and services in Kuwait and identifies the factors related to the use of social media applications in marketing academic libraries.

Design/methodology/approach – A quantitative data-collection approach using a paper and online questionnaire has been employed to elicit the opinions of librarians working in academic libraries in Kuwait in both private and public institutions. In total, 89 valid questionnaires have been analyzed using descriptive (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (factor analysis, correlations, experimental analysis and regression).

Findings – The study shows that the academic librarians have a positive perception toward the use of social media. The identified factors relating to the use of social media for marketing library information resources and services are the usefulness of social media tools in raising awareness and in providing needs analysis and satisfaction assessments. However, management support for the use of social media for library marketing is poor.

Practical implications – This study provides insights into the factors related to the use of modern social media platforms to promote information resources and services at academic libraries to provide outreach services to current and potential users.

Originality/value – This research contributes to the field of information studies as it highlights the importance of using social media platforms in marketing academic library information resources and services. Library administrators could use the results to develop social media marketing plans to effectively promote their library resources.

Keywords Social media, Kuwait, Academic libraries

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

New technologies have allowed libraries to adopt online marketing strategies to promote their resources and services (Siddike *et al.*, 2015) to as many users as possible (Garoufallou, Siatri, Zafeiriou and Balampanidou, 2013). In particular, social media, defined as “a group of Internet-based applications that allow for the creation and exchange of user-generated content” (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010, p. 62), has enabled people to interact and share information online (Xu *et al.*, 2015). With the rise of social media in the last decade, many libraries have included social media applications as primary marketing and communication tools to engage with the user community (Luo *et al.*, 2013; Kho, 2011; Garoufallou, Zafeiriou, Siatri and Balampanidou, 2013; Jahan and Ahmed, 2012), as social media offers real-time channels for communication, information sharing and interactive dialogue at any time on any portable mobile device (Palmer, 2014; Xu *et al.*, 2015).

ICT penetration and use in Kuwait is high, with social network use as high as 90 percent for Kuwaitis aged 15–44 years old. Social media in Kuwait has been found to be mainly used for news and information (94 percent) with female use (91.2 percent) and male use (89.4 percent) being relatively similar (The Central Agency for Information Technology, 2016). Therefore, given the depth of social media penetration in Kuwait, it is expected that this would have an effect on the use of social media in higher academic institutions.

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Unfortunately, academic libraries in Kuwait have lacked the initiative to adopt social media applications, even though the higher education institutions the libraries belong to generally have good technological infrastructure (Al-Daihani, 2009; Al-Daihani and AlAwadhi, 2015). Therefore, this exploratory study examined the factors related to the use of social media applications in academic libraries to market their resources and services. It was expected that the results of this study could assist academic libraries develop strategies for using social media tools to promote their resources and services, publicize news and events and increase their visibility, outreach and customer engagement.

2. Literature review

Marketing has become vital to the viability of public and non-profit organizations (Kotler and Levy, 1969). Over the past three decades, libraries have embraced marketing to improve library services and create stronger contacts with the user community (Garoufallou, Siatiri, Zafeiriou and Balampanidou, 2013; Garoufallou, Zafeiriou, Siatiri and Balapanidou, 2013; Siddike *et al.*, 2015) so as to increase library use, enhance the value and image of the library, provide user education, and change user perceptions (Al-Daihani and AlAwadhi, 2015). Library 2.0, which is a model for modern library services that focuses on user-centered change and participation, has significantly changed the types of interactions between libraries and their users (Ghuloum and Buabbas, 2016). Further, as technological developments have led to the increased use of internet services, academic libraries have begun to embrace social media to better engage with various community groups outside the physical library walls to ensure that resources and services are more accessible and user friendly (Harrison *et al.*, 2017). Xie and Stevenson (2014) investigated the use of social media in the digital libraries of ten cultural institutions and found that Facebook and Twitter were the most popular social media applications, and that social media was important within the institutions for providing information, marketing and promotions, connecting with users and sharing information.

Yi *et al.* (2013) examined the marketing activities in Australian academic libraries and found that classroom instruction and advertisements were the most effective marketing techniques, followed by one-to-one conversations and training sessions, the library website and social media. It was also found that webcasts, website announcements, workshops and social media tools were most effective in promoting the library's services and resources, while Facebook advertisements, blogs, e-mail, newsletters and Twitter were the most effective Web 2.0 tools for marketing library resources and services. Age and education were found to be correlated with the marketing of library services and resources, with older librarians and those with higher levels of education perceiving social media tools to be the most effective marketing tools.

Ramsey and Vecchione (2014) experimented with the use of new social media tools at the Albertson Library at Boise State University by collaborating with units outside the library. It was found that the use of social media networks in the library promoted engagement, creativity and collaboration. Given that these networks were mainly used for user interactions, it was easier for library staff to understand the users' needs. Twitter was also found to be an effective interactive tool as library tweets were shared and "liked" by users. The collaborative outreach with other university departments assisted the library in gaining a broader picture of specific user needs. However, fear regarding the type of information that might be posted on these social media networks was found to be one of the barriers.

Luo *et al.* (2013) presented a successful case study on an online video marketing project at an academic library in China, and found that social media tools could be effectively employed in libraries to share content, engage with target users and partner with students. Chatten and Roughley (2016) confirmed that using social media in academic libraries increased the engagement with users and assisted in the creation of a community of users. Similarly, Xu *et al.* (2015) explored the use of WeChat, a social media application, by 39 academic libraries in China and found that the main WeChat uses were answering

questions, interacting with users, sharing information and publicizing the library collections, services, events and news. The study stressed that the marketing information should be interesting, appropriate and based on users' needs, and concluded that identifying user needs using social media could assist academic libraries develop focused marketing plans for their services (Stvilia and Gibradze, 2017).

Siddike *et al.* (2015) investigated the perceptions of academic librarians toward the use of word-of-mouth (WOM) through social networking sites in marketing library services, and found that librarians had positive perceptions about the use of WOM as a marketing tool to promote library services, create awareness and build relationships with customers through social networking sites, and Facebook in particular. Twitter has been found to be the most popular social media platform for library marketing and engagement (Yi *et al.*, 2013; Ramsey and Vecchione, 2014; Stvilia and Gibradze, 2014; Xie and Stevenson, 2014; Al-Daihani and AlAwadhi, 2015). Stvilia and Gibradze (2014) confirmed that most academic library tweets were related to building and maintaining connections with library users and informing library users about news, events, workshops, exhibitions and facilities and to promote the library collections and services.

However, there were several factors found that could affect the adoption of social media for marketing library resources and services. For example, Mahesh (2002) identified several factors that hindered libraries and information centers from using social media for their marketing activities, such as the lack of a needs assessment to identify user requirements, a focus on collection and resource development, the lack of marketing skills in library staff and a lack of management support and encouragement for library marketing activities. Likewise, Al-Kharousi *et al.* (2016) identified both internal and external factors that affected the use of Web 2.0 applications in Omani academic libraries. The internal factors were related to low motivation, a lack of training and constant management changes, while the external factors were related to a lack of policy and regulations and poor internet speeds.

Another influencing factor was usefulness. Khan and Bhatti (2012) investigated the attitudes of academics and librarians toward the usefulness of social media for marketing library services and found that most respondents had a positive attitude. However, many respondents also indicated that there were problems that could hinder the application of social media in marketing the library information resources and services, such as a lack of marketing knowledge, inadequate training and technical issues. In a study exploring the use of Twitter in academic libraries, Al-Daihani and AlAwadhi (2015) analyzed a sample of tweets posted by 18 academic libraries, and found that Twitter was widely used for announcing library activities, interacting with users and sharing information.

This literature review has highlighted a number of factors related to the use of social media for marketing information resources, including user outreach, interacting with users, information sharing, creating awareness, needs analyses and satisfaction assessments. Other identified factors were the need for administrative support, adequate employee training and technical issues.

3. Research constructs and objectives

Based on the literature review, the following constructs were identified as being significantly correlated with the use of social media to market academic library information resources and services:

- The usefulness of social media tools in announcing activities, interacting with users, and sharing information (Xie and Stevenson, 2014; Luo *et al.*, 2013; Al-Daihani and Alawadhi, 2015; Siddike *et al.*, 2015; Khan and Bhatti, 2012; Ramsey and Vecchione, 2014; Stvilia and Gibradze, 2014).

- Using social media as an awareness tool to provide information about library events, activities and new arrivals for users and non-users (Ramsey and Vecchione, 2014; Xu *et al.*, 2015; Siddike *et al.*, 2015).
- Using social media as a needs analysis tool to evaluate information services and spaces, identify user needs and enhance communications to satisfy user needs (Luo *et al.*, 2013; Ramsey and Vecchione, 2014; Siddike *et al.*, 2015).
- Using social media as a satisfaction assessment tool to assess user satisfaction, identify the users' changing needs and receive service feedback (Mahesh, 2002; Khan and Bhatti, 2012).
- Management support (Mahesh, 2002; Khan and Bhatti, 2012) has also been identified as a critical factor for the use of social media applications when marketing information resources and services. Management support was related to the provision of adequate funding to support the development of library social media marketing programs, and librarian training activities.

This study also examined the demographic and professional characteristics of participants in terms of gender, age, academic qualifications, position and work experience, and type of academic library and the effect of these characteristics on the adoption of social media applications.

The following research objectives were developed from the identified constructs:

- (1) to investigate the use of social media applications in marketing information resources and services in academic libraries;
- (2) to identify the factors that have positive relationships with the use of social media to market academic library services and user interactions;
- (3) to determine whether certain personal and professional librarian characteristics are correlated with the factors related to the use of social media tools in marketing information resources and services in academic libraries; and
- (4) to explore the role of management support in the adoption of social media applications for marketing academic library information resources and services.

4. Methodology

This exploratory study sought to develop an understanding of how academic libraries can effectively market their information sources and services on social media platforms.

4.1 Survey instrument

A quantitative data-collection method using a questionnaire to address the research objectives and reflect the identified constructs was employed. The survey tool had three sections: the first section collected demographic and professional information about the respondents; the second section probed the respondents' use of social media in academic libraries and their preferred social media tools; and the third section asked respondents to give their opinions about the identified constructs; the usefulness of social media tools for awareness raising, needs analysis and satisfaction assessments; and the need for management support when adopting social media applications; on a Likert scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree."

As the questionnaire was designed in English and the study was carried out in Kuwait, it was necessary to translate the questionnaire into Arabic. Therefore, a panel made up of two faculty members from the Information Studies Department and two senior academic

librarians at Kuwait University revised the survey to ensure its validity and reliability and suggested some corrections.

4.2 Data collection

Paper and online questionnaires in Arabic and English were sent to librarians working in academic libraries in Kuwait in both private and public institutions to assess the use of social media tools in marketing library information resources and services in the two months from January to March 2016. In total, 96 questionnaires were returned in paper and electronic forms, and after incomplete questionnaires were excluded, there were 89 valid questionnaires available for analysis.

5. Results

5.1 Sample demographic characteristics

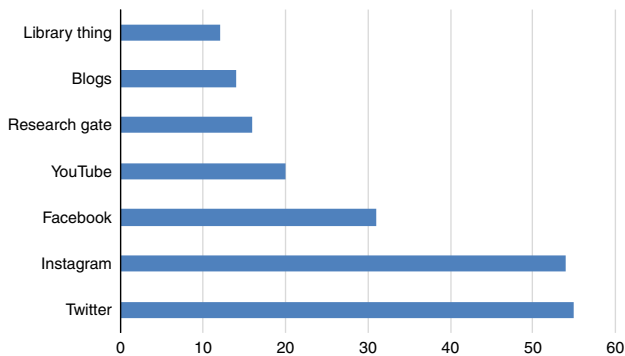
The sample was 33.7 percent males and 66.3 percent females, most respondents (78.6 percent) were aged 30 and above, and 79.8 percent had undergraduate degrees or above. Most respondents (60.6 percent) had more than 11 years of work experience, and 83.1 percent worked in public academic institutions, as shown in Table I.

5.2 Use of social media applications in libraries

It was found that a majority (72.3 percent) of respondents did not use social media applications in their libraries. However, if they were to use social media in the future, Twitter was identified as the most preferred (64.7 percent), followed by Instagram (63.5 percent), Facebook (36.5 percent), YouTube (23 percent), Research gate (18 percent), Blogs (16.5 percent) and Librarything (14 percent), as shown in Figure 1.

Demographics	Frequency	Percent
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	30	33.7
Female	59	66.3
<i>Age</i>		
20 – 25	5	5.6
26 – 30	13	14.6
31 – 35	19	21.3
36 – 40	12	13.5
≥ 40	39	43.8
<i>Education</i>		
High School	2	2.3
Diploma	7	8.0
Undergraduate degree	54	61.4
Graduate degree	25	28.4
<i>Experience</i>		
less than 2 years	3	3.4
2 – 5 years	12	13.5
6 – 10 years	18	20.2
11 – 15 years	19	21.3
≥ 15 years	35	39.3
<i>University type</i>		
Public	74	83.1
Private	10	11.2

Table I.
Demographic
characteristics of the
research sample

Figure 1.
Preferred social
media applications

5.3 Factor analysis

Exploratory factor analyses were employed for the validity and reliability of the research construct items (Table II). All constructs were found to have a high reliability with a Cronbach's α coefficient of 88.3, with a majority of the factor loadings being greater than 50 for all items, and most averages for both the constructs and instruments being greater than three- on a five-item Likert scale, suggesting that there was an acceptable level of consistency between the items.

5.4 Research construct correlations

As shown in Table III, there were strong positive correlations between the perceived usefulness of social media tools for marketing information resources and services and the

Constructs	Explained variance (%)	Reliability (%)	Factor loadings	Mean	Sig.
Usefulness	80.92	92		4.30	0.000
Q1: social media is important to market library activities			0.899	4.28	0.000
Q2: it encourages users to use library services			0.928	4.32	0.000
Q3: it helps in sharing information with users			0.877	4.34	0.000
Q4: it helps in interacting effectively with users			0.893	4.30	0.000
Awareness	80.08	86.6		4.24	0.000
Q5: it helps in providing users with information about new arrivals in libraries			0.922	4.36	0.000
Q6: it helps in informing users about library events			0.897	4.38	0.000
Q7: it encourages non-users to benefit from the library services			0.865	3.99	0.000
Needs analysis	76.66	89.6		3.92	0.000
Q8: social media helps librarians identify the needs of library users			0.879	3.84	0.000
Q9: it enhances librarian–user communication to satisfy users' needs			0.853	4.06	0.000
Q10: it helps in the evaluation of library information services			0.922	4.00	0.000
Q11: it helps in the evaluation of library spaces such as the studying and seating areas			0.847	3.80	0.000
Satisfaction	76.04	84.2		4.13	0.000
Q12: it helps in assessing the extent to which users are satisfied with library services			0.900	4.13	0.000
Q13: it helps the library keep up with the changing information needs of users			0.869	4.01	0.000
Q14: through social media, it is easy to get user feedback			0.847	4.28	0.000

Table II.
Exploratory
factor analysis:
factor loadings,
explained variance,
reliability coefficients
and research
construct means

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awareness ($r = 0.79$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$), needs analysis ($r = 0.662$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$) and user satisfaction ($r = 0.544$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$) offered by such tools. Social media as a needs analysis tool was also found to be correlated with satisfaction ($r = 0.80$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$), and social media as an awareness tool was found to be correlated with needs analysis ($r = 0.687$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$) and satisfaction ($r = 0.593$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$).

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5.5 Management support

The management support construct had a high reliability of 88.3, with the Cronbach's α coefficient and validity explaining 81.3 percent of the variance. However, management support was negatively perceived at an average of only 2.3 on the five-item Likert scale ($SD = 1.131$). Library management was seen to have a negative approach to the use of social media applications for marketing the library services and resources ($M = 2.14$, $SD = 1.275$). Respondents also felt that library management did not encourage them to attend training activities on the use of social media tools ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 1.278$), and there was also a negative perception regarding management's allocation of an adequate budget for social media marketing ($M = 2.14$, $SD = 1.187$) (Table IV).

5.6 Effect of demographics on the research constructs

This study also investigated the effects of the respondents' demographic characteristics on the research constructs. Several non-parametric tests were run against gender, age group, education, years of work experience, position and type of academic library. As shown in Table V, few significant relationships were found between the demographic characteristics and the research constructs. A significant relationship, however, was found between gender and the usefulness of social media tools ($p\text{-value} = 0.01$), awareness ($p\text{-value} = 0.018$) and needs analysis ($p\text{-value} = 0.022$). A significant relationship was also found between the type of the academic library (public or private institution) and the value of social media for needs analyses ($p\text{-value} = 0.028$).

5.7 Logistic regression analysis

A logistic regression analysis was conducted to identify the main predictors for the use of social media for marketing library information and services (usefulness, awareness, needs

Table III.
Correlation between
research constructs

	Usefulness	Awareness	Needs analysis	Satisfaction
Usefulness	1.0			
Awareness ($p\text{-value}$)	0.790** (0.000)	1.0		
Needs analysis ($p\text{-value}$)	0.662** (0.000)	0.687** (0.000)	1.0	
Satisfaction ($p\text{-value}$)	0.544** (0.000)	0.593** (0.000)	0.800** (0.000)	1.0

Note: **Correlation is significant at 0.01

Table IV.
Mean and standard
deviation for
management support

Management support	Mean	SD	Sig.
The library administration has a marketing program for library services through social media applications	2.33	1.289	0.000
The library administration encourages librarians to attend training activities to learn to use social media applications	2.46	1.291	0.000
The administration allocates an adequate budget for marketing library services over social media applications	2.14	1.191	0.000

analysis, satisfaction and management support) and their mutual interactions. This was a data analysis method for discriminating two binary groups to estimate the probability that an individual was in a particular group. The effects of the explanatory variables on the binary outcome were estimated and interpreted using the logistic regression method. This allowed for the identification of the explanatory variables that significantly contributed to the probability of a person obtaining a binary outcome (Albright *et al.*, 2004). Table VI shows that the model predicted 80.8 percent of the classified cases correctly regarding the use of social media for marketing information. The results in Table VII indicate that the usefulness of social media tools, the needs analysis and the satisfaction offered by such tools were significant predictors for the use of social media in marketing library information resources and services. However, awareness as a single variable did not show any significant predictions. However, the interactions between awareness \times usefulness, satisfaction \times usefulness, management support \times usefulness, awareness \times needs analysis, and management support \times needs analysis indicated a significant contribution of the prediction for the use of social media in marketing library information resources and services.

Constructs	Usefulness	Awareness	Needs analysis	Management support	Satisfaction
Gender: Mann-Whitney U (p -value)	570.500 (0.010)	573.500 (0.018)	589.500 (0.022)	698.000 (0.569)	630.500 (0.070)
Age: χ^2 (p -value)	1.636 (0.802)	2.767 (0.598)	1.778 (0.777)	2.640 (0.620)	1.682 (0.794)
Education: χ^2 (p -value)	1.099 (0.777)	1.262 (0.738)	3.821 (0.281)	2.492 (0.477)	3.489 (0.322)
Experience: χ^2 (p -value)	5.180 (0.269)	3.615 (0.461)	4.818 (0.307)	2.802 (0.591)	7.982 (0.092)
Position: χ^2 (p -value)	7.397 (0.596)	3.387 (0.947)	6.945 (0.643)	7.879 (0.546)	10.590 (0.305)
Library type: Mann-Whitney U (p -value)	284.500 (0.252)	236.500 (0.082)	206.500 (0.028)	251.000 (0.179)	227.000 (0.063)

Table V.
Effects of
demographic
characteristics on
constructs

Observed			Predicted	
			Use	Percentage correct
Use	0	53	3	94.6
	1	11	6	35.3
Overall percentage				80.8

Table VI.
Model classification

Constructs	B	SE	Wald	df	Sig.
Usefulness	31.069	11.769	6.969	1	0.008*
Needs analysis	-13.808	5.573	6.138	1	0.013*
Satisfaction	20.870	9.709	4.620	1	0.032*
Awareness \times usefulness	-2.202	0.930	5.600	1	0.018*
Satisfaction \times usefulness	-4.490	2.080	4.662	1	0.031*
Management support \times usefulness	-1.192	0.693	2.962	1	0.085**
Awareness \times needs analysis	2.422	1.093	4.912	1	0.027*
Management support \times needs analysis	1.446	0.773	3.504	1	0.061**
Constant	-88.125	41.017	4.616	1	0.032*

Notes: *,**Cut values are 0.050 and 0.010, respectively

Table VII.
Logistic regression
results for the use
of social media

6. Discussion

The majority of respondents had positive perceptions toward all study constructs for the use of social media applications for the marketing of the academic library information resources and services. Although the findings showed a low usage of social media in the academic libraries, the respondents indicated the importance of such tools and their preference for using Twitter, followed by Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. This finding corresponded with Yi *et al.* (2013), Ramsey and Vecchione (2014), Stvilia and Gibradze (2014), Xie and Stevenson (2014) and Al-Daihani and AlAwadhi (2015) that Twitter was one of the most popular social media platforms for library marketing and engagement as it was seen as valuable in connecting the library with users and the community to share information, promote services and events, and reach users and non-users (Forrestal, 2010), thereby achieving the study's first objective.

The findings of the logistic regression analysis indicated that the model predicted 80.8 percent of classified cases correctly regarding the use of social media for marketing information, suggesting that the libraries needed to adopt such social media tools. Moreover, the usefulness of social media, and the possibilities for needs analysis and satisfaction assessments using such platforms were perceived as significant predictors for the use of social media in marketing library information resources and services. These results were in line with the findings in previous research such as Xie and Stevenson (2014), Luo *et al.* (2013), Al-Daihani and AlAwadhi (2015), Siddike *et al.* (2015), Khan and Bhatti (2012), Ramsey and Vecchione (2014), Stvilia and Gibradze (2014) and Mahesh (2002). Interestingly, awareness as a single variable did not show any significant prediction; however, the interactions of awareness with needs analysis and usefulness were perceived as significant in predicting social media use. Further, the interactions between satisfaction \times usefulness, management support \times usefulness, and management support \times needs analysis were perceived to make a significant contribution to the predictions for the use of social media in marketing library information resources and services. This finding suggested that some factors may result in insignificant predictions if individually tested and only become significant if interacting or combined with other factors; these results achieved the second study objective.

The findings also showed significant positive correlations between the perceived usefulness of social media for marketing library information resources and services and awareness, needs analysis and satisfaction, which confirmed that social media could be useful in promoting library information resources and services, identifying user needs and satisfying these needs if used for engagement and non-user outreach. Female academic librarians found social media more effective in the marketing of library information resources and services than males. There were significant gender differences found in the perceptions of the usefulness of social media and its value as a tool for raising awareness and analyzing needs, thereby fulfilling the third objective of the study. Although both males and females had positive perceptions toward the use of social media applications, females had more positive perceptions than males. This could be explained by the fact that females are significantly more likely than males to use social networking sites (Duggan, 2013). These findings also demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between the type of the academic library (in public or private institution) and the use of social media as a needs analysis tool. Academic librarians in higher public institutions perceived the use of social media as a needs analysis tool more positively than their counterparts in the private institutions. This could be attributed to the larger populations in public academic institutions, as it is more difficult to assess user needs in traditional settings. Therefore, the use of social media could offer greater opportunities for librarians to identify the unique needs of specific users and to enhance communication to satisfy these identified needs. These results were in line with those in Ramsey and Vecchione (2014).

The role of management support has been recognized as critical to the adoption of social media for marketing libraries. As the fourth objective of the study attempted to investigate, it was found that all respondents negatively perceived management support, suggesting that library management had not developed any social media marketing programs for library services and resources. It was also found that in general, management did not offer the librarians any training opportunities and did not encourage them to attend such activities to improve their professional skills related to developing the marketing skills associated with the use of social media to promote the libraries' resources, services, activities or events. Further, as it was found that respondents were unaware of any budget allocations for social media marketing campaigns; consequently, management support for this item was negatively perceived. It is the role of higher management to cultivate an open communication environment for staff and to engage them in the planning processes (Cowart, 2017) such as deciding on appropriate budget allocations for training and other activities. These findings confirmed the results of Khan and Bhatti (2012) and Mahesh (2002) and highlighted the critical role of higher management in applying ICT, and specifically social media, to marketing their libraries. Higher management needs to create suitable marketing plans that consider the identified factors to provide direction for library advertising, promotion, outreach and other related activities (Falciani-White and Tomcik, 2015).

7. Conclusion

This study identified the factors that had a significant relationship with the adoption of social media for academic library marketing purposes. These factors were related to the usefulness of social media in promoting awareness and its value as a needs analysis and satisfaction assessment tool. The interactions of these factors were also found to be important in the social media adoption process. As found in previous literature and confirmed in this study, management support is considered essential in encouraging librarians and information specialists to adopt social media in academic libraries to promote library information resources and services and to provide outreach services for current and potential users.

Social media is a leveraging tool that should be effectively used by academic libraries to create, deliver and share information resources and services with users. Marketing through social media can enable academic libraries to develop networks through which users and non-users can interact and communicate their information needs. It also has the potential to increase users' awareness of academic libraries and their services, resources, activities, events and new arrivals.

Therefore, this study is a call to the higher management of libraries to take advantage of the opportunities offered by social media and to adopt these as marketing tools for information resources and services. Social media is now seen as a primary way to access and exchange information, interact with users to identify information needs and satisfy those needs, all of which could result in more efficient, effective and trustworthy libraries. Therefore, higher management needs to focus on the factors identified in this study that have a significant relationship with social media use. Even though this study was limited to academic libraries in Kuwait, the results could be applicable to other libraries in similar circumstances, such as those in the Gulf countries. Once social media tools are applied in libraries, further research is required to investigate their role and effectiveness in marketing library resources and services. Future research could also analyze the content of library-user interactions on social media and investigate management's perspective on the use of social media for academic libraries to compare and contrast the results with the findings of this study.

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