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Bridging the Gap with Social Media: Academic Library Innovation in ASMV University, Raichur

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Abstract

The ASMV University Library in Raichur, Karnataka, has been leveraging social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube to enhance service delivery, communication, and foster connections with students and faculty. A mixed-methods research study found that social media enhances the visibility of library resources, supports real-time information dissemination, and facilitates collaborative learning. It also bridges the digital divide in a semi-urban educational context, making academic support more accessible and responsive. The study emphasizes the importance of digital literacy among library professionals and users and calls for institutional policies that support continuous innovation. The paper concludes with actionable recommendations, including integrating social media strategies into library planning, developing targeted staff training programs, and establishing evaluation metrics to measure digital impact. These insights can be useful for other academic institutions implementing or refining their own social media initiatives in library services.

1. Introduction

Academic libraries are increasingly adapting to meet the needs of digital-native users, with social media offering a unique opportunity to enhance outreach, improve user engagement, and bridge information access gaps. In India, particularly in semi-urban regions like Raichur, Karnataka, digital divides continue to affect equitable access to educational resources. ASMV University Library recognizes the potential of social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube to foster dynamic and inclusive communication channels. By integrating these platforms into their service delivery model, the library aims to promote resources more effectively and cultivate a participatory user environment that responds to contemporary academic demands. This paper investigates the role of social media in academic library services at ASMV University, using a mixed-methods approach combining surveys, interviews, and usage data analysis. The findings offer insights into best practices and strategic frameworks for other academic libraries to embrace social media as a catalyst for innovation and inclusion.

2. Literature Review

Social media applications like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube have significantly impacted ophthalmological content dissemination, improving communication between doctors and patients. With the launch of interactive Web 2.0, social media has evolved into a platform for strategic business planning, educational activities, research, and public relationships. However, excessive academic content has led to extreme web-based traffic. The COVID-19 pandemic forced internet-based education and e-learning, promoting accessible communication, global collaborations, resource sharing, and reducing carbon footprint. (Kaur, K., & Gurnani, B. 2022, September) [10]. The study analyzed 325 university students' perceptions of Facebook information credibility. Results showed that students perceive information on Facebook as credible and of good quality. Age, social background, and educational level were found to

predict credibility. The findings are useful for information professionals, social media managers, teachers, and researchers to understand developing countries' students' perspectives on social media information credibility and provide guidelines for novice researchers. (Astleitner, H., & Schlick, S. 2025) [11]. Social Media Platforms (SMPs) have become crucial for students in higher learning institutions, influencing their academic achievement. A study found that pre-service teachers in Ghana use SMPs for entertainment, with WhatsApp being the most popular. SMPs, like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, have become the foundation for User-Generated Content since 2005. (Nantomah, I., Agbeko, M., & Adam, A. 2022) [13]. Social media platforms like Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, WhatsApp, Flickr, ResearchGate, YouTube, and LinkedIn provide easy ways for students, teachers, parents, and organizations to communicate quickly and cost-effectively. These platforms also support educational initiatives, allowing students and educators to share ideas, celebrate creativity, and receive immediate feedback. However, there are challenges and issues in utilizing social media effectively in higher education, and further research is needed to optimize its use and provide conclusive evidence for its effectiveness. (Gupta, A. K. 2014) [14]. This study categorized social media into three types: formal, informal, and entertainment. Formal social media is influenced by entertainment and informal platforms like WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Informal platforms include YouTube and Snapchat. The study suggests novel marketing strategies for social media marketing practitioners. Future research should focus on social media products for marketing and age marketing, examining the relationships between age versus focused social media usage and product versus focused social media correlations. (Maseke, B. F. 2022) [15].

3. Objectives
- To explore the current practices of social media use by ASMV University.
- To assess how effectively social media platforms reduce barriers to accessing library resources.
- To understand the real experiences and perceptions of users regarding social.
- To identify practical challenges faced by the library and users in integrating social media.

4. Knowledge of Librarians in Social Media
The integration of social media in academic library services relies on librarians' knowledge and skills in using digital platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube. At ASMV University Library, librarians have varying levels of understanding, ranging from basic operational skills to advanced capabilities like content creation and analytics interpretation. However, training and professional development opportunities in social media management are limited, leading to a reliance on self-learning and peer support. This gap in formal knowledge sometimes restricts the library's ability to fully leverage the interactive and analytical features of these platforms. Despite these challenges, librarians are motivated to improve their digital literacy and adopt best practices to serve the university community better. Continuous skill enhancement through workshops, webinars, and collaborative learning is essential

to empower librarians and sustain the innovative use of social media in library services.

5. Social Media Literacy
Social media literacy is the ability to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information using social media platforms. It is crucial in academic libraries, where it involves both library staff managing content and users navigating and critically assessing information. At ASMV University Library, social media literacy is essential for maximizing the benefits of platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube. Librarians must master technical aspects, ethical considerations, privacy issues, and online engagement dynamics. Users must discern credible information, participate responsibly, and use digital tools for academic purposes. However, gaps in social media literacy exist among library staff and users, limiting effective communication, reducing engagement, and increasing vulnerability to misinformation. Addressing these gaps requires training, awareness campaigns, and integration into digital literacy programs. Enhancing social media literacy contributes to a more informed academic community, supporting the library's mission to provide equitable access to information and promote lifelong learning skills.

6. Librarian 2.0
Librarian 2.0 refers to the transformation of traditional librarians into tech-savvy professionals who engage with users through digital tools and social media platforms. This evolution is driven by changing user expectations, technological advancements, and the expanding scope of library services. At ASMV University Library, Librarian 2.0 embodies a proactive approach to integrating social media channels into everyday library operations. These librarians are facilitators of digital knowledge, community builders, and content creators, leveraging online platforms to promote resources, provide instant support, and encourage interactive learning. Key attributes of Librarian 2.0 include digital literacy, adaptability, collaborative skills, and a user-centered mindset. They curate relevant digital content, manage virtual communities, and analyze user engagement data to improve services. They embrace innovation and commit to ongoing professional development, particularly in mastering social media literacy and emerging technologies.

7. Use of Social Media to Promote Academic Libraries
Social media has become a crucial tool for academic libraries to increase visibility, engage users, and promote resources and services effectively. Platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube provide unique opportunities for libraries to reach diverse audiences, create dynamic content, and foster dialogue with students, faculty, and the broader academic community. At ASMV University Library, social media is strategically used to promote new acquisitions, events, workshops, and training sessions. Facebook pages and groups serve as hubs for announcements, sharing library news, and fostering community. WhatsApp groups enable direct communication, allowing librarians to send personalized updates and respond to user queries in real time. YouTube is used to create engaging video content, such as tutorials on research techniques and information literacy skills, which

support independent learning and complement traditional library instruction. Social media promotion not only enhances resource visibility but also humanizes the library experience by facilitating two-way communication and feedback, breaking down traditional barriers between staff and users. It also helps bridge the digital divide by reaching users with limited access to physical library spaces, supporting the university's mission to foster equitable access to information and learning resources.

8. Social Media and Academic Libraries' Support for Learning

Social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube have become essential tools for academic libraries to enhance learning experiences. These platforms provide timely, accessible, and diverse learning resources that complement traditional methods. At ASMV University Library, WhatsApp groups provide quick access to study materials, announcements, and peer discussions, encouraging collaborative learning among students. Facebook pages act as interactive learning environments, sharing curated content, research guides, database links, and webinar invitations. YouTube enhances learning through instructional videos that teach research skills, database navigation, and citation methods. These visual resources cater to different learning styles and provide flexibility for students to learn at their own pace. Social media helps address diverse learner needs by offering multiple channels for support, promoting information literacy and digital competency. This approach aligns with the evolving educational landscape, where blended and online learning environments are increasingly common. Overall, the integration of social media in academic libraries enriches the learning process by making services more accessible, interactive, and user-friendly, contributing significantly to student success and academic achievement.

9. Literature Gap/Research Gap

The use of social media in academic libraries is gaining attention globally, but there is a lack of studies on its adoption and impact in semi-urban and regional university settings in India. While existing literature highlights its role in enhancing library outreach, user engagement, and digital literacy, limited empirical evidence is available from institutions like ASMV University in Raichur, where infrastructural challenges and digital divides persist. Many studies focus on platform-specific functionalities or user behavior but rarely provide comprehensive mixed-methods analysis that combines librarians' knowledge, user perceptions, and usage data. The study aims to fill these gaps by providing an in-depth examination of social media use at ASMV University Library, contributing localized insights that can inform broader academic library innovation in similar contexts.

10. About Adhi Kavi Sri Maharushi Valmiki University Library, Raichur

The Adikavi Sri Maharshi Valmiki University Library serves as a pivotal resource center for the academic community, supporting the university's mission to provide quality education and research opportunities. The library is situated on the university's Krishnatunga Campus in

Yaragera, Raichur District, Karnataka. Established in 2021 by an Act of the Karnataka State Legislature, the university was formerly a postgraduate center of Gulbarga University, Kalaburagi. It offers a diverse range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs across various disciplines, aiming to foster academic excellence and research innovation. The department offers a Master of Arts in Library & Information Science, equipping students with the necessary skills for library and information management careers. It also encourages research in various areas, contributing to the field's advancement. The department also provides workshops, seminars, and training programs to enhance students and library staff's professional competencies.

10. Library Services

https://www.collegebatch.com/21300-raichur-university-campus-tour-raichur

The Library is a comprehensive information system that efficiently provides necessary documents and information for academic, research, and consultancy missions, offering a range of services to meet the informational needs of students, faculty, and researchers.

- **Physical Collection:** The library houses a vast collection of books, journals, and reference materials across multiple disciplines.
- **Digital Resources:** Access to e-journals, e-books, and other digital resources is facilitated through the university's network, supporting research and learning activities.
- **Study Facilities:** The library offers well-equipped reading rooms and study spaces to accommodate individual and group study sessions.
- **Online Services:** Users can avail services such as online book renewal, access to digital catalogs, and remote access to e-resources, enhancing the convenience and accessibility of library services.

11. Library Statistics

Library access and services are restricted to university members with valid Institutional IDs, and visitors require permission. Internet access and e-resources are also restricted. Library discipline includes entering one's name, department, and time of entry legibly, maintaining silence,

maintaining strict decorum, and avoiding smoking, eating, sleeping, and talking loudly. Readers must present their Reader's Card or University Card for inspection, and non-members can use library materials with prior permission. Items like sticks, umbrellas, and boxes should be deposited at the property counter and returned. Documents must be left on the table, and the Library reserves the right to inspect items.

English	• 8108
Kannada	• 15133
SC/ST Book Bank	• 639
Journals	• 53
Kannada News Papers	• 18
English News Papers	• 5
Weekly & Monthly Magazines	• 16

12. Subject-wise Book Collection
The Adikavi Sri Maharshi Valmiki University Library maintains a well-organized and comprehensive subject-wise book collection to support the diverse academic programs and research needs of its students and faculty. The collection is classified and arranged according to major disciplines taught at the university, ensuring ease of access and efficient use of resources. the subject-wise distribution of the book collection includes

1. **Humanities:** Literature, History, Philosophy, Languages, and Cultural Studies
2. **Social Sciences:** Political Science, Sociology, Economics, Public Administration
3. **Science & Technology:** Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Environmental Science, Computer Science
4. **Library and Information Science:** Classification, Cataloguing, Information Retrieval, Digital Libraries
5. **Commerce & Management:** Accounting, Business Studies, Marketing, Financial Management.
6. **Education:** Educational Psychology, Pedagogy, Curriculum Studies, Teacher Education.
7. **Constitution:** Indian Constitution, Human Rights

13. Digital Library Section
The Adikavi Sri Maharshi Valmiki University Library features a dedicated Digital Library Section, equipped with Wi-Fi-enabled computers to facilitate seamless access to digital resources. This section allows students, researchers, and faculty members to access a wide range of full-text databases, e-books, e-journals, and other online academic resources. The digital infrastructure supports independent and guided research by providing users with the tools necessary to conduct literature reviews, explore academic content, and complete research projects efficiently. The availability of high-speed internet and modern computing facilities ensures that users can engage in uninterrupted digital learning and scholarly work. This initiative not only enhances the research environment within the university but also plays a significant role in bridging the digital divide, especially for students from rural and semi-urban backgrounds who may lack reliable internet access at home.

14. Use of Social Media in the ASMV University Library

The Adikavi Sri Maharshi Valmiki (ASMV) University Library has strategically adopted social media as a core component of its outreach and service model. Recognizing the increasing digital presence of its users particularly students and faculty the library leverages platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube not just for information dissemination but as tools to build a more connected, accessible, and user-driven academic environment.

A. WhatsApp
WhatsApp is one of the most actively used platforms by the library for direct, real-time communication. Dedicated WhatsApp groups have been created for students of different departments, where library staff regularly post updates on:
▪ New arrivals of subject-specific books
▪ Changes in library timings
▪ Reminders for book returns or renewals
▪ Alerts for upcoming workshops or webinars

Additionally, students can send direct messages to library staff for assistance with locating materials, requesting resources, or resolving account issues. This immediate, mobile-based service has proven especially useful in supporting students who may be unable to visit the library in person due to geographical or time constraints.

B. Facebook
The library's official Facebook page acts as a digital notice board and interactive space. Regular posts include:
▪ Photos and details of library events (e.g., reading week, orientation sessions, book exhibitions)
▪ Academic content such as resource recommendations, reading lists, and open-access tools
▪ Engagement posts like quizzes, book reviews, or polls to increase student interaction
▪ Celebration of special days such as Librarian's Day, National Education Day, or International Literacy Day

This platform not only increases the visibility of the library's activities but also allows for meaningful interaction with users who may offer suggestions, ask questions, or express their needs.

C. YouTube
The library's YouTube channel hosts a growing repository of educational and instructional videos designed to support

both independent learning and guided research. Videos include:

- How-to tutorials on using the library catalog or digital databases
- Workshops on citation styles, avoiding plagiarism, and academic writing
- Recorded lectures or guest talks from library-hosted events
- User guides for accessing e-resources remotely

These resources serve as a permanent and accessible knowledge base, especially helpful for students who need to revisit topics or learn at their own pace. It also enables the library to extend its services beyond physical boundaries and traditional office hours.

D. Broader Impact and Relevance
The implementation of social media tools has significantly improved access, user satisfaction, and engagement with library services at ASMV University. More importantly, in a semi-urban setting like Raichur, where students may face infrastructural or digital access barriers, the use of commonly available platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook makes the library's support system more inclusive and equitable, These efforts have helped:

- Promote digital literacy among students and faculty
- Create virtual communities of learners and readers
- Make library services more user-centered and data-driven
- Enable the library to function as a hybrid digital-physical academic hub

15. Membership of Raichur University Library
A. Access and Eligibility
- Library access is limited to authorized members of the university primarily students, faculty, and staff who must present a valid institutional ID card to gain entry and access services, including Internet and e-resources raichuruniversity.ac.in.
- Non-members (outsiders) may be granted access to library materials only with prior permission from the University Librarian raichuruniversity.ac.in.

B. Entry and Conduct Requirements
- Users must sign in at the entrance, noting their name, department, and time of entry in a register raichuruniversity.ac.in.
- They must maintain decorum no smoking, loud talking, eating, or sleeping allowed raichuruniversity.ac.in.
- Certain items like umbrellas, bags, or briefcases must be deposited at the property counter, and users receive a token in return raichuruniversity.ac.in.

16. Membership Categories & Borrowing Privileges
While detailed circulation rules specific to Raichur University are not explicitly listed on the website, forms available (as referenced) indicate the following categories:
a. Students, Teaching Staff, and Non-Teaching Staff are eligible to apply for membership raichuruniversity.ac.in.
b. Institutional forms are provided for

Table 1: Summary Table

Category	Access & Privileges
University Students	Authorized entry; can access resources with ID and membership forms
Teaching Staff	Same as above – eligible for borrowing and use
Non-Teaching Staff	Eligible for membership and access to library services
Outsiders / Visitors	Can access only with prior permission from Librarian
General Conduct	Must sign entry log, follow decorum, deposit prohibited items

17. Conclusion
The integration of social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube has significantly transformed the services and outreach of the Adikavi Sri Maharshi Valmiki University Library, Raichur. By leveraging these digital tools, the library has enhanced communication, increased accessibility to resources, and fostered a more engaged academic community. This approach not only bridges the digital divide, particularly in a semi-urban context, but also supports a more dynamic, inclusive, and user-centered library environment. The study underscores the importance of embracing technological innovations to meet the evolving needs of users. It also highlights the critical role of librarians as facilitators of digital literacy and community engagement in the modern academic landscape. Moving forward, continued investment in training, strategic planning, and policy development will be essential to sustain and expand the positive impact of social media on academic library services. Ultimately, the experience of ASMV University Library offers a valuable model for other academic libraries seeking to modernize their services and better serve their communities in an increasingly digital world.

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