

Research Article

The Use of Social Media for Dental Practice Marketing

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Abstract

Objective: Dentists use social media (SM) for various reasons, but only limited studies explored their use for dental marketing. This study aimed to explore the use of social media among dentists in Jordan to market their dental practice.

Materials and Methods: This cross-sectional study used a self-administrated online questionnaire of 17 items distributed to 1000 dentists. The survey included questions related to dentists' demographic and profession-related information, SM use in general, and social media use for dental practice marketing. Chi-square test was conducted to assess the association of dentists' demographic and professional information with SM use for marketing.

Results: There were a total of 510 dentists participating in the study. Approximately two thirds (68.4%) were working in the private sector. Facebook was the most popular SM platform used by dentists (97.6%) and the primary purpose of using SM accounts was for personal uses. Yet, about one third (31.2%) of dentists were using SM for marketing, and three-quarters of dentists were thinking that using SM for marketing is effective and practical (73.3%). Dental marketing through SM was significantly higher among males, those younger than 40 years old, private sector practitioners, and dentists who obtained training in cosmetic dentistry or professional training on SM use.

Conclusion: Dentists hold a positive attitude toward SM as an effective tool for gaining new patients. Yet, a small percentage of dentists were using SM to market their practice. Training in cosmetic dentistry or professional training on SM use could contribute to dental marketing through SM in the future.

INTRODUCTION

The use of Social Media (SM) use is rapidly growing worldwide. It presents a variety of platforms through which information and ideas can be created and shared across online networks [1]. These online networks are used to share opinions and connect to other people around the globe [2, 3]. Other than personal communication, the use of SM had evolved throughout the years to include other aspects such as education, business, marketing, and consultation. Using SM for marketing was a practical tool to attract customers and increase profit by allowing marketers to reach a huge number of consumers [4]. Customers can rate their satisfaction with a certain service provider and show the reasons behind their rating, which act as a guide for other customers. Studies indicated that positive online reviews increase sales and that negative reviews decrease sales and consumers [4-6]. Moreover, SM users can easily search for health information, share their own experience, communicate with their health care providers, rate them, and write reviews. These benefits were reported in the dental practice, as dentists used SM to gain information about various dental techniques and possible treatments, establish a reputation, attract new patients, promote their dental work, and educate others [7-9]. Hence, the popularity of using SM for marketing dental services is increasing because of

its effectiveness, cost-efficiency, feasibility, and convenience [3, 10]. As a valuable tool for marketing, dentists' attitude toward SM use for marketing should not be underestimated, and the level of awareness among dental practitioners about using SM in their practice could considerably affect their career [4, 8]. Despite this significant impact of SM, there are a limited number of studies on such aspect, and no studies in Jordan were reported on the use of SM by dentists and reasons of their use. The need for this assessment is assured when noting that the number of dentists is increasing in the country, and the popularity of using SM is also increasing [11]. Thus, this study aimed to assess the attitude and perception of Jordanian dentists on using SM for marketing purposes. and the popularity of using SM is also increasing [11]. Thus, this study aimed to assess the attitude and perception of Jordanian dentists on using SM for marketing purposes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS**Study Design and Settings**

This was a cross-sectional observational study; it was conducted to assess the use of SM for marketing dental practice in Jordan. Data were obtained between November of 2019 and January of 2020. The study covered different regions in Jordan; 12 governorates; four in the north: (Irbid, Ajloun, Jerash and

Mafrag), four in the middle: (Zarqa, Balqa, Madaba and Amman), and four in the south: (Karak, Tafilah, Ma'an, and Aqaba) using an online questionnaire targeting dentists who are working in Jordan (clinics, hospitals, universities, health centers).

Instrument

The structured questions of this survey were prepared by reviewing other studies related to the topic [12-15]. The questionnaire was designed in English and consist.

The questionnaire is composed of 17 close-ended questions organized into four categories: Socio-demographic questions (5 questions), Dentist's profession-related questions (4 questions), questions related to SM use (3 questions), and questions related to the use of SM for marketing (5 questions).

The demographic portion of the instrument included questions on gender, age, years of practice, the region of practice, and the working sector. The second section covered questions related to dentists' profession, including place of work, advanced education and training, special training in cosmetic dentistry, and official training on SM use. The third section included questions about SM use, and the last section covered the topic of SM use for marketing. The instrument contained multiple-choice questions and Yes/No questions.

The questionnaire was distributed online and validated by experts, who were one public health expert, and 3 dentists; one of them specializes in business administration and health marketing. Further, a pilot testing was conducted on 15 dentists to confirm the applicability of the questions and minor modifications were done to remove any ambiguity. A consent form was written in the survey to ensure voluntary participation, which included a statement about the objectives of the study, the optionality of participation and the right to refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time.

Sampling

The study population consists of dentists working in all governorates of Jordan and all sectors, including the public, military, academic and private sectors. The required sample size for this study with a power of 80% and 5% margin of error was 426. However, a total of 1000 dentists were outreached to overcome any possibility of a low response rate. Participants were selected from Facebook groups related to dentists in Jordan. Among these groups, five groups were chosen randomly: dentists of Jordan, Jordanian dental scientific forum, united dentists of Jordan, Jordanian dental club, and Dentists without borders. Two hundred (200) members of each group were invited to participate in the study after reviewing their Facebook profiles. Distributing the survey to members selected in each group was completed over two consecutive days; 100 members each day. A systematic random selection was used by inviting each third member in the list for the first 200 members. Each dentist was contacted individually to assure privacy. A total of 1000 invitations through a link to the questionnaire were distributed via Facebook messenger application in November of 2019, and the survey was closed in January of 2020. A total of 510 responses were collected during that period [16].

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 26. Descriptive statistical analysis (Frequency) was used to explore the demographic characteristics of dentists, profession-related information, SM use, and dental marketing through SM. Furthermore, demographic information and dentists' profession-related variables were cross-tabulated with (Do you use social media to market your practice?) and (What do you think about using social media to market for a dental practice?) to detect if an association exist using Chi-square test of independence. A p-value of 0.05 or less was considered statistically significant.

A) **Variables:** Age, gender, years of practice, region of practice, working sector, completing a master or residency program, cosmetic dentistry training, working in the private sector, official training on using SM were independent factors. SM use in marketing and the dentist's opinion about using SM for marketing were dependent factors.

B) **Rescaling:** Some variables were re-categorized in cross-tabulation because of the small numbers in some cells that may bias the results and to enhance the comparability of differences presented; A) Age was re-categorized into two groups: Younger than 40 years old (merging younger than 30 years old and 30-39 years old) and 40 years or older (merging 40-49 years old and 50 years or older), B) Region of practice was re-categorized into three groups: North (Irbid, Ajloun, Jerash, and Mafrag), Middle (Amman, Zarqa, Balqa, and Madaba), and South (Karak, Tafilah, Ma'an, and Aqaba), C) Working sector was re-categorized into two groups: private sector and other sectors (Academia, Public sector, and Military), D) "Do you use social media to market for your practice" was re-categorized into three groups: Yes, No (No, and not planning to use it), No, but planning to use it (merging No, but I will use it if I know how and No, but planning to use it).

RESULTS

Socio-Demographic and Background Characteristics

A total of 510 responses were completed, with an overall response rate of 51%. Table 1 presents the demographics and background characteristics of the study sample. Most respondents (58.6%) were females. A total of 52.4% of dentists were younger than 30 years old, followed by 23.9% in the 30-39 age group, 16.3% in the 40-49 age group, and 7.5% aged 50 years or more. Half of the participated dentists had less than 5 years of experience (50.6%). Most dentists were from Amman and Irbid (46.3%, 27.5%, respectively). The fewest number of participated dentists were from Balqa and Ma'an (both equal to 1%). About two thirds of dentists were working in the private sector (68.4%), more than one-third (38.4%) were working in their private clinics, and 41.6% in someone's else private clinic. Most dentists haven't completed a master degree or a residency program in dentistry (73.1%) and haven't received any official training or a certificate on using social media (81.2%). However, many completed training in cosmetic dentistry (54.1%).

Social media use

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution of SM use among

Table 1: Socio-demographics and profession -related information of dentists.

Characteristics	N (%)	
Gender	Male	211 (41.4%)
	Female	299 (58.6%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)
Age	Younger than 30 years old	267 (52.4%)
	30-39 years old	122 (23.9%)
	40-49 years old	83 (16.3%)
	50 years or older	38 (7.5%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)
Years of practice	Less than 5 years	258 (50.6%)
	5 to 10 years	70 (13.7%)
	More than 10 years	182 (35.7%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)
Region of practice	Amman	236 (46.3%)
	Irbid	140 (27.5%)
	Ajloun	10 (2.0%)
	Jerash	31 (6.1%)
	Mafraq	20 (4.0%)
	Balqa	5 (1.0%)
	Zarqa	29 (5.7%)
	Madaba	7 (1.4%)
	Karak	9 (1.8%)
	Tafilah	6 (1.2%)
	Ma'an	5 (1.0%)
	Aqaba	12 (2.4%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)
You are currently working in:	Academia	35 (6.9%)
	Private sector	349 (68.4%)
	Public sector	82 (16.1%)
	Military	44 (8.6%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)
Do you work in the private sector?	Yes, in my clinic	196 (38.4%)
	Yes, in someone else's clinic	212 (41.6%)
	No	102 (20.0%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)
Have you completed a master or residency program in dentistry?	Yes	137 (26.9%)
	No	373 (73.1%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)
Do you have any training in cosmetic dentistry?	Yes	276 (54.1%)
	No	234 (45.9%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)
Have you ever received any official training or a certificate on using social media?	Yes	96 (18.8%)
	No	414 (81.2%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)

Table 2: Social media use among participating dentists.

Social media use	N (%)	
*Which of the following do you have an account on?	Facebook	498 (97.6%)
	Instagram	377 (73.9%)
	Twitter	133 (26.1%)
	LinkedIn	165 (32.4%)
	Snapchat	276 (54.1%)
	WhatsApp	467 (91.6%)
*The purpose of using these accounts:	To share photos, videos and chat online	352 (69.0%)
	To stay connected with family, friends and colleagues	456 (89.4%)
	To participate in discussions related to dentistry	280 (54.9%)
	To share general information about dentistry and new advancements	213 (41.8%)
	To make advertisements about your dental work	160 (31.4%)
Frequency of using social media:	Daily	467 (91.6%)
	Weekly	34 (6.7%)
	Monthly	9 (1.7%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)
Do you use social media to market for your practice?	Yes	159 (31.2%)
	No, but planning to use it	187 (36.7%)
	No, and not planning to use it	146 (28.6%)
	No, but I will use it if I know how	18 (3.5%)
Total	510 (100.0%)	
Do patients tell you that they heard about you through social media?	Yes, many patients	87 (17.1%)
	Yes, a few patients	134 (26.3%)
	No	161 (31.6%)
	I use social media but not to market for my practice	128 (25.1%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)
What do you think about using social media to market for dental practice?	Effective and practical	376 (73.7%)
	Not effective and waste of time	31 (6.1%)
	Not ethical and should not be practiced	103 (20.2%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)
*How do you use social media to market for your practice?	I don't market on social media	342 (67.1%)
	I mainly advertise my work in cosmetic dentistry	100 (19.6%)
	I advertise everything I do in my practice	90 (17.6%)
	I advertise for special offers of my clinic	37 (7.3%)
Do you think that marketing dental work through social media will increase among dentists in the future?	Yes	486 (95.3%)
	No	24 (4.7%)
	Total	510 (100.0%)

*More than one answer could apply

dental practitioners. Among SM platforms, Facebook was the most popular one used by dental practitioners (97.6%), followed by WhatsApp (91.6%), while LinkedIn (32.4%), and Twitter (26.1%) was the least popular. The main purposes for using SM accounts among dentists was to stay connected with family, friends, and colleagues (89.4%), and to share photos, videos, and chat online (69.0%), while making advertisement about dental work was reported the least (31.4%). Moreover, most dentists in the study reported that they use social media daily (91.6%).

Approximately one third (31.2%) reported current use of SM for dental marketing. However, 36.7% were not using SM for marketing but planning to and 3.5% were not using SM for marketing but will use it if they know how to use it. It's interesting

that 28.6% were not using SM for marketing and not planning to use it. When dentists were asked if patients heard about them through SM, only 17.1% reported that few patients heard about them through SM, and 31.6% reported that no patients heard about them through SM, as shown in Table 2. Furthermore, around three-quarters of participating dentists believed that using SM for marketing their dental practice is effective and practical (73.7%), 20.2% believed that it's not ethical and should not be practiced, while 6.1% believed that it's not effective and waste of time. For those who were using SM for marketing their dental practice; 19.6% use it for the advertisements of their cosmetic work, 17.6% for advertisement of everything they do in their practice and 7.3% for the advertisement of special offers in their clinics. In addition, most dentists of this study believed that

dental marketing through social media would increase among dentists in the future (95.3%).

Dentists' Perceptions about using SM to Market their Dental Practice

Table 3 demonstrates dentists' perceptions of using SM to market the dental practice in relation to their demographic information and profession-related characteristics. An association was demonstrated between gender, age, years of practice, dentists working in someone's else private clinic, official

training in SM use, and dentists' perception about using SM to market dental work.

There were more female dentists who perceived using SM to market dental work as "effective and practical" than male dentists (79.9% vs. 64.9%, respectively). Moreover, dentists who perceived using SM to market dental work as "effective and practical" were mostly from the younger age group (less than 40 years old group (79.4%). This perception of "effective and practical" was also evident among dentists with less than 5 years of experience (83.3%), and among dentists working in someone's

Table 3: Dentists' characteristics and their perceptions about using social media to market their practice.

Characteristics		What do you think about using social media to market for dental work?			Total	p-value
		Effective and practical	Not effective and waste of time	Not ethical and should not be practiced		
Gender	Male	137 (64.9%)	23 (10.9%)	51 (24.2%)	211 (100.0%)	>.001*
	Female	239 (79.9%)	8 (2.7%)	52 (17.4%)	299 (100.0%)	
Age	Younger than 40 years old	309 (79.4%)	17 (4.4%)	63 (16.2%)	389 (100.0%)	>.001*
	40 years or older	67 (55.4%)	14 (11.6%)	40 (33.1%)	121 (100.0%)	
Years of practice	Less than 5 years	215 (83.3%)	8 (3.1%)	35 (13.6%)	258 (100.0%)	>.001*
	5 to 10 years	48 (68.6%)	5 (7.1%)	17 (24.3%)	70 (100.0%)	
	More than 10 years	113 (62.1%)	18 (9.9%)	51 (28.0%)	182 (100.0%)	
Region of practice	North	154 (76.6%)	10 (5.0%)	37 (18.4%)	201 (100.0%)	0.493
	Middle	196 (70.8%)	19 (6.9%)	62 (22.4%)	277 (100.0%)	
	South	26 (81.3%)	2 (6.3%)	4 (12.5%)	32 (100.0%)	
You are currently working in:	Academia, Public sector, Military	114 (70.8%)	7 (4.3%)	40 (24.8%)	161 (100.0%)	0.139
	Private sector	262 (75.1%)	24 (6.9%)	63 (18.1%)	349 (100.0%)	
Have you completed a master or residency program in dentistry?	Yes	91 (66.4%)	9 (6.6%)	37 (27.0%)	137 (100.0%)	0.057
	No	285 (76.4%)	22 (5.9%)	66 (17.7%)	373 (100.0%)	
Do you have any training in cosmetic dentistry?	Yes	198 (71.7%)	20 (7.2%)	58 (21.0%)	276 (100.0%)	0.392
	No	178 (76.1%)	11 (4.7%)	45 (19.2%)	234 (100.0%)	
Do you work in the private sector?	Yes, and I have my own dental practice	134 (68.4%)	19 (9.7%)	43 (21.9%)	196 (100.0%)	.018*
	Yes, but I work for someone else	170 (80.2%)	7 (3.3%)	35 (16.5%)	212 (100.0%)	
	No, I don't work in the private sector at all	72 (70.0%)	5 (5.0%)	25 (25.0%)	102 (100.0%)	
Have you ever received any official training or a certificate on using social media?	Yes	78 (81.3%)	11 (11.5%)	7 (7.3%)	96 (100.0%)	>.001*
	No	298 (72.0%)	20 (4.8%)	96 (23.2%)	414 (100.0%)	

*Significant relationships

else clinic (80.2%). Besides, an official training or a certificate of SM lead to a higher rate of those perceived marketing as “effective and practical”; 81.3% of those having an official training of SM use compared to 72% of those who don’t have training.

Dentists use of Social Media to Market Dental Work

Table 4 demonstrates dentists’ use of SM to market dental work in relation to dentists’ demographic and profession-related information. As noticed, male dentists were using SM to market dental work more than females (37.9% vs. 26.4%, respectively), but female dentists who were planning to use SM for marketing dental practice were more than male dentists (45.2% vs. 33.2%, respectively). Further, it was mainly dentists younger than 40 years’ old who were using SM to market their dental work (32.1%) and planning to use it (42.7%).

There was a significant increase in SM usage for marketing dental practice among private practitioners (41.3%) compared to academia, military, and public sector practitioners (9.3%). Yet, a significant increase in planning to use SM for marketing dental practice was evident among academia, military, and government practitioners (47.2%). For those working in the private sector,

using SM to market dental work was higher among those working in their own private clinics (50.5%) than those working in someone else’s clinic (23.6%).

Although a master or residency program in dentistry didn’t increase the use of SM for marketing dental practice, training in cosmetic dentistry made a significant difference in using SM for marketing; 39.9% of those having training in cosmetic dentistry use SM for marketing compared to about 20.9% of those who don’t have training in cosmetic dentistry. This difference was also noted for those who had training on SM use. Marketing dental practice was significantly higher among those who had official training on SM use (58.3%) compared to those who didn’t have any training on SM use (24.9%), (p-value <0.05%).

DISCUSSION

Although SM plays a significant role in healthcare and dentists are generally active users of different SM platforms [17], few studies investigated the use of SM in dentistry. Hence, this study is unique as it’s the first to assess the use of SM for dental marketing among Jordanian dentists. Findings demonstrated

Table 4: Dentists’ characteristics and their use of SM for dental marketing.

Characteristics		Do you use social media to market for your practice?			Total	p-value
		Yes	No, but planning to/I will use it if I know how	No, and not planning to		
Gender	Male	80 (37.9%)	70 (33.2%)	61 (28.9%)	211 (100.0%)	0.008*
	Female	79 (26.4%)	135 (45.2%)	85 (28.4%)	299 (100.0%)	
Age	Younger than 40 years old	125 (32.1%)	166 (42.7%)	98 (25.2%)	389 (100.0%)	0.008*
	40 years or older	34 (28.1%)	39 (32.2%)	48 (39.7%)	121 (100.0%)	
Years of practice	Less than 5 years	71 (27.5%)	121 (46.9%)	66 (25.6%)	258 (100.0%)	0.005
	5 to 10 years	22 (31.4%)	31 (44.3%)	17 (24.3%)	70 (100.0%)	
	More than 10 years	66 (36.3%)	53 (29.1%)	63 (34.6%)	182 (100.0%)	
Region of practice	North	57 (28.4%)	83 (41.3%)	61 (30.3%)	201 (100.0%)	0.782
	Middle	93 (33.6%)	109 (39.4%)	75 (27.1%)	277 (100.0%)	
	South	9 (28.1%)	13 (40.6%)	10 (31.3%)	32 (100.0%)	
You are currently working in:	Academia, Public sector, Military	15 (9.3%)	76 (47.2%)	70 (43.5%)	161 (100.0%)	>0.001*
	Private sector	144 (41.3%)	129 (37.0%)	76 (21.8%)	349 (100.0%)	
Have you completed a master or residency program in dentistry?	Yes	47 (34.3%)	47 (34.3%)	43 (31.4%)	137 (100.0%)	0.259
	No	112 (30.0%)	158 (42.4%)	103 (27.6%)	373 (100.0%)	
Do you have any training in cosmetic dentistry?	Yes	110 (39.9%)	100 (36.2%)	66 (23.9%)	276 (100.0%)	>.001*
	No	49 (20.9%)	105 (44.9%)	80 (34.2%)	234 (100.0%)	
Do you work in the private sector?	Yes, and I have my own dental practice	99 (50.5%)	51 (26.0%)	46 (23.5%)	196 (100.0%)	>.001*
	Yes, but I work for someone else	50 (23.6%)	108 (50.9%)	54 (25.5%)	212 (100.0%)	
	No, I don’t work in the private sector at all	10 (9.3%)	46 (46.0%)	46 (46.0%)	102 (100.0%)	
Have you ever received any official training or a certificate on using social media?	Yes	56 (58.3%)	27 (28.1%)	13 (13.5%)	96 (100.0%)	>.001*
	No	103 (24.9%)	178 (43.0%)	133 (32.1%)	414 (100.0%)	

*Significant relationship

that SM use in dental marketing was remarkable among dentists who are males, young, and work in a private clinic.

In the current study, dentists were participating from almost every city in Jordan. Yet, three out of each four of them were from either Amman or Irbid (73.5%), which are the largest two cities in the country. Categorizing cities into 3 main regions in Jordan showed no statistically significant difference among them in the percentage of dentists who use SM for marketing dental practice. In addition, there was a higher ratio of females (1.5:1) participating in this study, pointing to the possibility of a higher percentage of female dentists in Jordan, their higher commitment to participate in studies or their higher tendency to use SM because of their biological inclination to networking as they are more vocal, expressive and willing to share their experiences [18]. Nonetheless, males reported a significantly higher percentage of using SM for dental marketing, which could be apprehended in the Jordanian culture-that males are primarily responsible for financially supporting their family.

The use of SM was apparent in all ages, but more than half of the participated dentists were younger than 30 years' age, and only 7.5% of dentists were 50 years old or older, which indicates that SM use decreases with age. This accords with results of studies done in Saudi Arabia [7], India [15], and Malaysia [19], but were contrary to a study that reported no difference in the phenomena of SM use among those over 50 years of age and youth [20]. The difference between young and old dentists could be attributed to skills and needs. Young dentists tend to be more skillful about ways of communication and interaction through SM, have fewer responsibilities, and have more free time. In comparison, older adults could prefer physical interaction because of their social and psychological needs, besides their life commitments. Moreover, older dentists are often contended with reputation they built over the years and the number of regular patients they have in their clinics, while young dentists are still building their business and look for more patients to succeed in their career. This could also explain why as the number of participants' years of experience increases, the possibility to use SM for dental marketing decreases.

Facebook was the most popular SM platform used by the study participants (97.6%). This was also the conclusion of Nelson et al. [21] and a study in the United States by Henry et al. [22]. On the contrary, a study undertaken in Saudi Arabia found that Snapchat was the most popular SM platform being used by dentists [23]. Another study in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, showed that Twitter was the most commonly used platform [24]. Regardless of the SM platform used, study participants were mainly using SM to stay connected with family, friends, and colleagues (89.4%) or to share photos and chat online (69.0%), which were similar reasons reported in a study in South Africa. [25], Moreover, the South African study reported that participating dentists were using SM to participate in discussions related to dentistry (60.1%), which was close to our study results (54.9%).

In the present study, about one third only (31.2%) of the participated dentists used SM to market their dental practice, which is higher than the results of a study in Malaysia demonstrating only one fifth (20%) of their participants were using social media for marketing [19]. Findings of this study

suggested that the higher use of SM for personal use compared for dentistry-related reasons or marketing could be attributed to the lack of knowledge or skills about ways of using SM for marketing; almost 40% reported their plans to use SM in the future including those who will use if are taught. Other factors reported for not using social media for marketing were insufficient time, insufficient knowledge, security concerns, and effectiveness beliefs [25-27]. Although there is a generally inefficient use of SM for dental marketing, some studies reported that dentists who use SM use it effectively and for various reasons. An example is a study conducted on dental practices in the USA in 2012 reporting that 51% of them were using SM, and 91% of those used it for marketing, and 73% to increase their online presence [22]. One main factor that contributed to the increase in the use of SM among dentists for marketing is the possession of a degree in cosmetic dentistry or previous training on using SM. This could explain why, in this study, dentists working in private clinics were more likely to use SM marketing for the dental practice. On the other hand, public and military dental sectors in Jordan are limited in the type of cosmetic work they could apply in their practice and dentists working in academia are have limited time to do clinical work; considering their academic responsibilities. Thus, dentists working in a private clinic are expected to market more on SM and significantly perceive that as effective and practical. Nonetheless, most participants believed that SM use in dental marketing will increase, which agrees with a study in South Africa (83.5%) [25], and a study in Malaysia (94.9%) [19].

Some of the limitation to address in the current study is the lack of previous studies that specifically address this subject and thus, enough references that could enrich the study, especially in Jordan were not available. In addition, the low response rate (51%), which is common in web-based surveys [16] and the possibility that some dentists don't feel comfortable disclosing their marketing practices via SM.

CONCLUSION

There is a definite need for further studies that explore the current topic, especially which only a few studies are available, which show a random use of SM in dental marketing and with varying rates. In addition, the power of social media platforms in marketing will possibly contribute to promoting SM use among dentists in the near future despite the fact that not all of them currently use it for dental marketing. Another finding that seems promising in increasing the use of SM for dental marketing is training in cosmetic dentistry and professional training on SM use. Although this could only be more beneficial to dentists working in the private sector, it would increase the awareness among dentists, in general, about the power of SM in marketing.

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