

Marketing of Library Services: A Survey of University Libraries in North East, Nigeria

Rabi Chislon Bantai

Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Library Bauchi, Nigeria

Maureen Jegbefume Chukwudum

Federal College of Education Library (Technical), Gombe, Nigeria

Mal. Saidu Mustapha

Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Library Bauchi, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study investigated the current form of marketing of library services in university libraries in the North East, Nigeria. The study was guided by three objectives which include: ` identify the current form of marketing of library services in universities in North- East, Nigeria, determine the challenges faced by librarians in marketing of library services in universities North-East Nigeria and recognize strategies for enhancing marketing of library services in universities North-East Nigeria. Three research questions were formulated. The study employed the descriptive survey design. The population of study was the one hundred and ninety librarians working in the university libraries in the North- East were used. A questionnaire developed by the researcher was used as instrument for data collection. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation was adopted for data analysis. The study found that the current form of marketing is relatively poor. Marketing is more traditional in nature as responses shows less use of ICT's. This implies the probable underutilization of library resources as traditional method has been proven inadequate in service delivery in the era of ICT. The challenges identified by the study are numerous. They include lack of adequate staff, inadequate ICT facilities, lack of trained staff with marketing skills, poor power supply to the library, inadequate funding, and lack of technical know-how to effectively use the ICT facilities, Lack of management user interface to ease communication with staff among others. Strategies for enhancing the marketability of library services include adequate ICTs, effective internet service, steady power supply, user/management interface, and trained staff among others.*

Key words: marketing, library services, university libraries, North –East, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Today, libraries are bound to use new expertise and approach in order to change, survive, compete and remain relevant in the world of virtual information. Libraries in the past were the major information service providers that users turn to when information is needed. They had no need to market resources and services. However, this monopoly has been challenged by the presence of other information service providers such as Amazon, the internet etc. courtesy of the new information technology. He, Madeline and Sabrina (2019) emphasized that libraries should shift from the traditional form of service consisting of collection development, instruction, reference services and be proactive, support clients based on their requirements. This they state would take in newer communication methods and practices without which librarianship's future as a whole will hurt.

A university library is a sub-system within the university with the sole responsibility of supporting the universities attains its goals through the provision of information resources and services that meet the cravings of the entire community particularly teaching, learning and research. University libraries are an organized body that keep stalk of the reality of many evolutions. They acquire and hold superior information resources in addition to unbroken holdings of all materials from the past years to the present day for academic community needs. University libraries across the globe offer different types of services with the intent to expose their wealth of information resources as well as create ease of accessibility and utilization. Library services are those activities libraries engages in with the view to enhance utilization of its resource for the benefit of users. These services range from circulation, reservation, current awareness, selective dissemination of information, interlibrary lending, indexing and abstracting, user education, bibliographic services, referrals, reprography, bindery, translational services etc. However, as the needs and wants of users keep changing and pressure for speedy delivery mounts, university libraries are expected to regularly evaluate their services and delivery methods. Emphasizing the need for change in library services delivery, Gupta and Savard (2009), states that the impact of technology, other environmental changes is fast changing the concept of library services. They stated that library services now take place away from the library's physical wall and marketing becomes necessary in order to offer benefits to users, shrink barriers to access, persuade and inform clients as well as carefully plan to satisfy users' needs effectively. Marketing therefore is a must use tool for information and service organizations such as university libraries in this technology age without which there would be little or no success.

Marketing is a concept that applies to both profit and non-profit organizations. The real idea of incorporating marketing into library managerial processes is to connect information users with the rich information resources in the library that meet their needs. In university scenery, marketing gives university libraries the force to provide value demand-based and user-oriented information services. According to Usoro (2020), the essence of marketing in libraries is aimed at reinforcing

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the basic values of the library in a changing environment and at the same time meets the needs of the library clientele. On the need for the inclusion of marketing into library processes for effective service delivery, Adekunmisi (2013) admits that, Libraries are no longer the only information service industry that users depend on, they compete with other departments for funding, consequently, the need to justify what is being given. In the same vein, Ameen (2015) acknowledged that to succeed in a competitive world, any company must adopt the new marketing philosophy and processes used to create consumer loyalty. Kendadamath (2009) buttressed that information products and services are similar to customer products and services in many respect but decries the lack of enthusiasm on the part of librarians to employ marketing principles in libraries. Marketing as a practice he said, seems alien to many library and information professionals and that some librarians still hold this view and see no room for such practice in a not-for-profit profession like librarianship. Level of services and resources provided by the university library to users greatly determine the point universities achieve their goals

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the current form of marketing of library services in universities in North-East Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Identify the current form of marketing of library services in universities in North-East, Nigeria,
2. Determine the challenges faced by librarians in marketing of library services in universities In North-East Nigeria
3. Recognize strategies for enhancing marketing of library services in universities in North-East Nigeria.

Research Questions

This following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the current forms of marketing of library services in North-East, Nigeria?
2. What are the challenges facing librarians in marketing of library services in universities in North- East, Nigeria?
3. What are the strategies for the enhancing marketing of library services in universities in North East, Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main stake of marketing is the exchange of relationship of products, services and ideas that could bring about reciprocated satisfaction between the clients and organizations. Marketing is the trending issue in all types of businesses today. Marketing in any service organization is fundamental to keeping clients conversant with products and services that match their needs and interests.

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Marketing has to do with connecting and convincing a client that those products and services are what they need. The American Marketing Association (2021) defined the concept of marketing as the action and processes for generating, conversing, conveying and offering value to customers, partners and the society at large. Kotler (2011) saw it as the science and art of exploring, creating and delivering value to satisfy the needs of a target market at a profit. Buttressing further the concept of marketing, Edewor, Okite-Amughoro, Osuchukwu, and Egreaajena (2016) conceptualized marketing as a process done repeatedly, a tried and true approach for marketing services to customers' wants and needs. The focal point of marketing is the customers and those products and services that appropriately meet their needs as well as teaching them to choose a certain product or service over that of competitors. This makes employing the concept of marketing into university library processes not debatable.

Library marketing is essential in keeping users and potential clients well-versed about the resources and services that match their interests and also a reminder that the library is still a greater choice for their information needs in today's world. According to Drake in *Encyclopedia of Library and information Science* (2003), marketing is the spreading of the word that you are in business and that you are the best at it. It went on to it is about convincing others that the services you provide are essential knot between the users and library resources and services. A quality service in academic libraries is a major issue not necessarily reliant on libraries physical structure but internet base services. To this end, Gupta and Savard (2009) opined that the impact of technology, other environmental changes and the concept of library services is changing very fast. They state that library services now take place away from the library's physical wall and marketing becomes necessary to offer benefits to users, shrink barriers to access, persuade and inform clients and at the same time carefully plan to satisfy users' needs effectively. Hashim and Moktar (2012) concerned with how to know library users' needs focusing on academic libraries, stressed the need for library staff to leave their comfort zones to pursue users where they live, offices, coffee rooms, relaxation center and interview them, observe and collect valuable facts. Collecting valuable information is key to marketing of library services library services to clients.

Marketing of products and services requires different methods or tools as deemed fit by concerned organizations. Bamigbola (2013), Adegoke(2015) and Mutongi and Chiwanza (2016) in their separate studies identified tools such as e-mails, telephone, library web page, faculty/departmental meetings and social media tools(what's' up. twitter, inster-gram, face book etc) as means for interaction, content sharing, discussion and collaboration. Marketing can be seen as the series of activities being embark upon to successfully persuade users and potential clients that their services are beneficial to them. In lieu of the aforementioned arguments, the study seeks to investigate the current form of marketing of library services in universities in North-East, Nigeria towards information service delivery to users.

METHODOLOGY

The North-East geopolitical zone consist of six state (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe) with eleven universities, six public and five private. All the universities were studied and the focus was on marketing of library services. The descriptive survey design was employed for the study. The population of the study was 190 librarians working in both federal and state university libraries. The instrument for data collection was a self designed structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics using mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation to answer the research questions.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**Table 1: Population of respondents by university Library**

S/N	Name of University Library	No. Questionnaire Administered	No. Questionnaire Retrieved	% of response Universities
1.	Ramat Library University of Maiduguri	54	42	25.8%
2.	A.T.B.U Library Bauchi	26	22	13.5%
3.	Modibbo Adama Uni. of Tech. Yola	12	9	5.5%
4.	Federal University Gashua	14	14	8.6%
5.	Federal University Wukari	16	16	9.8%
6.	Federal University Kashere	15	12	7.4%
7.	Gombe State University, Gombe	16	13	8%
8.	Taraba State University, Jalingo	6	6	3.7%
9.	Yobe S tate University, Damaturu	11	10	6%
10.	Bauchi State University, Gadau	13	12	7.4%
11.	Adamawa State University, Mubi	7	7	4.2%
	Total	190	163 (85.8)	100%

Out of the one hundred and ninety (190) instruments administered to the librarians in the university libraries, one hindered and sixty-three (163) representing eighty-six percent (86%) were successfully filled, retrieved and found useful for the analysis.

Research Question One: What are the current forms of marketing of library services in North-East, Nigeria?

The data for answering research question one above is presented below

Table 1: Mean responses of respondents on the current form of marketing of library services in universities in North-East, Nigeria.

		Ownership				Overall		Rank	Decision
		Federal		State					
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	Marketing is a business tool designed to improve the money profits of organizations	2.96	.78	3.09	.78	2.99	.78	1 st	A
2	Faculty teaching staffs (researchers) know of the information resources in the library because they are stakeholders in collection development.	2.84	.91	2.52	.72	2.75	.87	4 th	A
3	The university library does not push out anticipated information needs to researchers because it amounts to a waste of time and resources.	2.73	.90	2.65	.67	2.71	.84	7 th	A
4	The university library has no marketing policy in place.	2.58	.88	3.13	.81	2.73	.90	5 th	A
5	The library has all the appropriate ICTs for the marketing of resources to its numerous users	2.39	.99	2.24	1.02	2.35	.99	15 th	D
6	The university library has a website	2.66	.93	2.78	.84	2.69	.90	9 th	A
7	The website is not updated regularly 24/7 to keep users updated on developments as it concerns them.	2.66	.93	2.48	.86	2.61	.91	10 th	A
8	The library has internet services 24/7	2.35	1.05	2.48	.66	2.38	.96	13 th	D
9	The university library for decades have been connected to its users through its resources, marketing is not necessary	2.73	.84	2.65	.79	2.71	.83	7 th	A
10	Library patronage in terms of borrowing and use of library resources by faculty teaching staff is high enough to call for marketing	2.70	.89	2.78	.81	2.72	.87	6 th	A
11	The University Library has the profiles of the faculty teaching staff (Researchers)	2.52	.85	2.30	.70	2.46	.81	11 th	D
12	The university library market its resources	2.98	.87	2.96	.76	2.97	.84	2 nd	A
13	The library has the appropriate management software that connects the library and its users	2.15	.90	2.41	.86	2.22	.90	16 th	D
14	The faculty teaching staff are too many for the library to market its resources to	2.26	.83	2.65	.77	2.36	.83	14 th	D
15	The university library is not in competition with any information service providers to warrant for marketing of its resources.	2.44	.84	2.50	.72	2.46	.81	12 th	D
16	All professional Librarians have the proficiency to effectively operate ICT facilities to market library resources	2.78	.84	3.02	.80	2.85	.84	3 rd	A
17	library staff employ marketing tools and techniques (social media tools(twitter,youTube,Whats up etc) surveys, adverts, direct mail, content design) for marketing	2.06	.77	1.87	.62	2.01	.74	17 th	D
Cluster Mean		2.58	.88	2.62	.78	2.59	.86		A

Key: Agree= A; Disagree=D; SD= Standard Deviation

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The findings of the study on research question one revealed that marketing of library services in universities in the North-east is poorly developed in terms of connecting users with the information resources that meet their needs. This is evident in the responses of the respondents in items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 18. Item 1 which states marketing is a business tool for money profit making organization ranked highest (\bar{X} =2.99, SD=.78) while social media tools such as Twitter, You Tube What's up, surveys, direct mail is ranked lowest (\bar{X} =2.01, SD=.74). This, however, opposes the claim by Gupta and Savard (2009) that marketing is a necessity in order to offer benefits to users, shrink barriers to access, persuade and inform clients and at the same time carefully plan to satisfy users' needs effectively. The findings also validate the assertions by Kendadamath (2009) that there is a lack of enthusiasm on the part of librarians to employ marketing principles in libraries. Marketing as a practice seems alien to many library and information professionals and some librarians still hold this view and they see no room for such practice in a not-for-profit profession like librarianship (Kendadamath ,2019). The poor current state of marketing of library services could possibly be either that library and information schools have no courses in this area or they are not foundational which could have helped the prospective librarians acquire marketing skills for development of service oriented programmes in libraries.

Research question two: What are the challenges facing librarians in marketing of library services in universities in North- East, Nigeria?

The data for answering research question two above is presented below.

Table 2: Mean Responses of Challenges Associated with the marking of library services in universities North-East Nigeria

		Ownership				Overall		Rank	Decision
		FEDERAL		STATE					
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	Lack of adequate staff	2.80	.87	3.39	.74	2.96	.88	5 th	A
2	ICT facilities are inadequate for the information profiling of researchers needs	2.87	.92	3.00	.76	2.91	.88	8 th	A
3	The university library experiences poor response from researchers	2.94	.84	3.00	.70	2.96	.80	6 th	A
4	Ineffective network access in the library	3.10	.77	2.83	.68	3.02	.75	2 nd	A
5	Lack of appropriate profiling software for profile construction	2.95	.83	3.04	.67	2.98	.79	3 rd	A
6	Lack of appropriate ICT facilities for information profiling	2.90	.88	2.67	.76	2.84	.85	11 th	A
7	Lack of trained staff with marketing skills	2.90	.87	2.85	.73	2.88	.83	9 th	A
8	lack communication skills with researchers to facilitate information profiling	2.69	.76	2.67	.76	2.69	.76	13 th	A
9	poor power supply to the library for effective profiling of researchers	3.15	.99	2.83	.80	3.06	.95	1 st	A
10	Poor response attitudes of researchers to library request for profiles	3.02	.81	2.70	.84	2.94	.83	7 th	A
11	poor record of researchers' profile in the university library	2.90	.71	2.63	.88	2.82	.76	12 th	A
12	Inadequate funding	3.01	.80	2.87	.81	2.97	.80	4 th	A
13	Lack of sufficient information resources in both print and electronic format	2.77	.88	2.54	.78	2.71	.86	17 th	A
14	The librarians lack the technical know-how to effectively use the ICT facilities	2.77	.93	2.57	.72	2.72	.88	16 th	A
15	Lack of user interface software	2.81	.88	2.98	.77	2.86	.85	10 th	A
16	Inadequate knowledge in user/management software	2.77	.86	2.70	.81	2.75	.85	15 th	A
17	Librarians are not keen about the use of ICT facilities	2.60	.94	2.33	.76	2.52	.90	14 th	A
18	The non-chalant attitude of university librarians towards ICT application	2.67	.89	2.80	.78	2.71	.86	18 th	A
Cluster Mean		2.86	.86	2.79	.77	2.84	.84		A

Keys: Agree=A; Disagree=D; SD= Standard Deviation

Business service activities is increasing daily due to changes in consumer demands and organizations are expected to take advantage of the evolving technology in the marketing of library services. The findings of the study on research question two revealed the form of challenges facing the marketing of library services in universities in the North-East. The responses range from lack

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of adequate staff, inadequate ICT facilities, lack of trained staff with marketing skills, inadequate funding, lack of technical know-how to effectively use the ICT facilities, Lack of user interface software to ease communication with staff among others with poor power supply to the library for effective profiling of researchers ranking highest(\bar{X} =3.06, SD=.95) and Librarians not keen about the use of ICT facilities ranking lowest(\bar{X} =2.52 SD=.90 All these challenges are a huge barrier and a pointer to the poor state of marketing of library services in universities in North-east, Nigeria. The finding lines up with studies by Igwebuike (2018); Adebayo, Ahmed and Adeniran (2018) and Olorunfemi and Ipadeola (2018) which identified barriers to marketing of information products and services in university libraries in Nigeria to include: inadequate professional human resources with knowledge on marketing, poor marketing policies in universities, poor information technology infrastructure, lack of training in marketing skills, poor maintenance of ICT Equipment, high cost of bandwidth, absence of connectivity and lack of ICT skills among librarians. The findings also authenticated report by Okon, Ime and Ima-obong (2015) and Abdulsalami and Salami (2013) that university libraries claim to use library websites that are poorly developed for marketing.

Research Question three: what are the strategies for enhancing marketing of library services in universities in North East, Nigeria?

The data for answering research question three is presented below

Table 3: Mean responses of respondents on the strategies for enhancing information profiling of researchers for effective marketing of library services in Universities in North-East, Nigeria.

		Ownership				Overall			
		FEDERAL		STATE					
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	The university library should deliberately employ the right caliber of staff with the right competency.	3.23	.84	3.35	.79	3.26	.83	A	5 th
2	The university Management needs to support the library with ICT facilities for the information profiling researchers'	3.53	.70	3.67	.52	3.57	.66	VA	1 st
3	The University management should improve funding of university libraries	3.56	.71	3.67	.52	3.59	.67	VA	2 nd
4	The university library should carry out enlightenment for researchers to respond to library requests for profiles for improved services	3.45	.78	3.57	.50	3.48	.72	A	11 th
5	There is a need to improve network access in the academic or school area.	3.52	.76	3.57	.54	3.53	.71	VA	7 th
6	The university management should provide appropriate ICT facilities for information profiling	3.44	.81	3.70	.47	3.51	.74	VA	8 th

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7	The librarians should update their communication skills with researchers to facilitate information profiling	3.35	.78	3.41	.58	3.36	.73	A	13 th
8	Libraries should ensure efficient record-keeping in the university library	3.47	.71	3.54	.59	3.49	.68	A	10 th
9	University library should improve its collection of information resources in both print and electronic format	3.55	.68	3.52	.59	3.54	.65	VA	6 th
10	The librarians need to be re-skilled(training and retraining) to have technical know-how in the use o the ICT facilities	3.49	.69	3.52	.51	3.50	.65	VA	9 th
11	University library should have an alternative power supply for greater performance	3.58	.68	3.57	.54	3.58	.64	VA	4 th
12	The university library should be more proactive in sourcing for funds within and without the university to catch up with trends in the society	3.40	.72	3.37	.53	3.39	.67	A	12 th
13	University libraries should acquire suitable management software that assists in the information profiling of researchers	3.60	.68	3.54	.55	3.59	.65	VA	3 rd
Cluster Mean		3.47	.73	3.54	.56	3.49	.69	VA	

Keys: Very Appropriate =VA; Appropriate=A; Less Appropriate = LA; Not Appropriate-=NA; SD= Standard Deviation.

The respondents were asked to indicate strategies for enhancing marketing of library services in universities North- East, Nigeria. The strategies identified include that university management should improve funding of university libraries (\bar{X} =3.59, SD=.67) ranked highest, while university libraries should deliberately employ the right caliber of staff with the right competency (\bar{X} =3.26, SD=.83) is ranked lowest. Others strategies include provision of alternative power supply for greater performance, university management to support the library with ICT facilities for the marketing of library services, improve network access in the academic or school area, provide appropriate ICT facilities, librarians to be re-skilled(training and retraining) to have technical know-how in the use of the ICT facilities, university librarians to be more proactive in sourcing for funds within and without the university to argument its budget among others.

CONCLUSION

The ultimate goal of any product and service organization is to connect the right users. Marketing in today's world is an inescapable phenomenon to both profit and non-profit organizations in achieving their goals. Library marketing is essential in keeping clients and potential clients well-versed with the resources and services that match their needs and interests. It is the acts organizations engage in with the view to generating revenue or improving services maximally.

Marketing of library services is a necessity for all types of libraries if its resources must be maximally utilized and this requires the use of the new technologies.

By analyzing data collected from respondents, this study has shown that the current form of marketing is relatively poor. Marketing is more traditional in nature as responses shows less use of ICT's. This connote that libraries in this region mostly rely on flyers, notice boards, exhibition, etc. to market their services instead of employing the trending social media technology tools such as twitter, YouTube, Whatup e-mails, etc which are faster, convenient, less time consuming, attention drawing etc for marketing of library services. This entail under utilization of library resources as traditional methods has been proven inadequate in service delivery in this technology era. The challenges identified by the study are numerous. They include lack of adequate staff, inadequate ICT facilities, lack of trained staff with marketing skills, poor power supply to the library, inadequate funding, lack of technical know-how to effectively use the ICT facilities and Lack of management / user interface to ease communication with staff among others. Strategies for enhancing the marketability of library services include adequate ICTs, effective internet service, steady power supply, user/management interface, and trained staff among others.

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