Information Impact

Effectiveness of Information Service Delivery through Marketing of Library Resources and Services

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Abstract

This study examined the effectiveness of information service delivery through marketing of library resources and services. A descriptive survey design was used for the study with a population of 119 library staff. Complete census was adopted as the entire population was used for the study. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaires. In analyzing the data, descriptive statistics such as percentages, mean and frequency tables were used. The findings of the study showed that the library services that are available for marketing in the university library include lending services, reservation services, interlibrary loan, document delivery services, current awareness services amongst others. The study also revealed that the respondents showed mixed attitude towards marketing of information. Findings also discovered that different methods are used in marketing of library information resources and services which ranges from exhibition and display, organizing trainings, seminars and workshop, media release through radio and television amongst others. The findings equally showed that the problems militating against marketing of library information resources and services include lack of effective communication between librarians and users, inadequate fund, lack of facilities to market library resources and services, network problem andpoor access to information technologyamongst others. It was recommend that more funds be allocated to developing libraries by the parent organization, that library management should expose librarians to marketing library services through trainings, conferences, seminars, workshop and symposiums and that facilities that are needed for effective marketing of library services should be provided to libraries.

Keywords

Service Delivery, Information, Libraries, Library Resources, Marketing

Introduction

The primary concern of every library today is to be self-sufficient in their resources and to provide an ultimate level of services to reach more potential users.This naturally requires a shift from product or services orientation to customer or need orientation (Martey,2014). The information industry has grown dramatically in services, revenue and coherence over the last decade. Libraries around the world are facing rising cost and dwindling budget due to technological advances and todays dynamic economic climate. As a result, marketing concepts are increasingly adopted within the library environment. Marketing covers those activities that connect the organization to those parts of its outside world that use, buy, sell or influence the output it produces and the benefits and services it offers (Jose &Bhat,2017). Webber (2016) pointed out that organisations such as meusums, universities, libraries and charities need to market their causes and their products to gain political, social as well as economic support. Libraries and information centres have begun to realize that by using market principles and techniques, they can understand better their user's needs, justify funding, communicate more effectively with variety of external audiences and achieve greater efficiency and optimal result in delivering product and services that meet the identified needs of their client. Four main factors, namely information explosion, technology revolution, escalating library costs and increasing competition by information providers and web-based commercial services providers are responsible for encouraging the library professionals to develop a marketing strategy to its operations and services. Libraries therefore need to continue to respond to such challenges in the quest to enhance the use of their resources and services. This study therefore focuses on using marketing as a tool to accomplish library goals and objectives thereby ensuring effectiveness of service delivery in information services.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine the effectiveness of service delivery through marketing of library information resources and services. The specific objectives are to:

i.   Analyze the library services available for marketing in university libraries
ii.   Ascertain librarians' attitude towards marketing of library information resources and services
iii.   Assess the methods used in marketing of library information resources and services in libraries
iv.   Discover problems militating against marketing of library information resources and services

Literature Review

Marketing library services and products is significant in any dynamic library services in a competitive environment. Libraries have historically been confident that their product had such intrinsic merit that users would automatically be attracted; they believed that people should use the library. Kaane (2016), suggested that with the mushrooming of new information providers, such as cyber café, mega-book stores, online book dealers, the internet community, consultants and other web-based commercial services operators, libraries cannot continue to assume that they are the only source of information that people will consult. Librarians have to adopt

marketing as a tool if they have to exist in the information environment. Sharma and Bhardwaj (2019) stated that it is important for librarians to actively market their services. For marketing will enable librarians to spread information and draw attention to their resources and services to the user community. Martey (2014), stated that marketing will enable librarians gain competitive edge over their more aggressive and wealthy competitors and this is achieved by letting users and potential users know the advantages of using the libraries. Adeyoyin (2015) stated that when libray services are marketed, it creates relationship between the customer and the library which is paramount as libraries are no longer the only source of information provider. He went further to state that marketing brings about recruitment of new customers and the retention and expansion of relationships with existing customers.

In another vein, Mahesh (2012) argued that marketing is very necessary in today's and tomorrow's world because government funding of libraries and information centres has been declining. Therefore, libraries and managers must be forced to generate revenues not only for acquiring state of the art facilities, but also for their own survival. This they have to do by marketing their services to users and potential users. To Kotler (1995) quoted in Rowley (2015), marketing is very important to organizations such as museums, universities, libraries and charitable organizations in order to gain political and social support as well as economic supremacy. Gupta (2017) pointed out that marketing is important to identify the information needs of potential users. In his opinion, library and information managers should not only be interested in the group of people who do use their services. They should also be interested in potential users. While Abdulsalami and Salami (2013) reiterated that marketing is very important as it's a means of ensuring that librarians and librarianship are integrated in both today and tomorrows global culture. Saravanan (2017)emphasized that the challenges of budget cuts, increased user base, the rapid growth of material, rising cost, networking demands, competition by database vendors and complexities in information requirement have made it very necessary to market library services.

According to Kaane (2016) marketing is necessary component of any organization, be it public or private, due to then three basic reasons; helps institutions to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction, helps institutions to enhance the perceived value of their service and to ensure survival of the institutions. Gupta (2017) summarized the reasons for marketing in the following points; to focus on providing an environment in which users can study and work, to focus on the believe that each user has unique needs, requirement and expectations when he or she visits the library, and commitments to helping the user develop skills in order to acquire information from various sources. In a nutshell, information explosion, technology revolution and escalating costs are responsible for encouraging the library profession to develop marketing strategies in its operations and services.

Methodology

A descriptive survey design was used for the study with a population of 119 library staff. Complete census was adopted as the entire population was used for the study. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaires. In analyzing the data, descriptive statistics such as percentages, mean and frequency tables were used.

Analysis of Data

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution and Retrieval Rate

Population	No of Questionnaire Distributed	No of Questionnaire Returned	% Value of Questionnaire Returned
Library Staff	119	68	57%

Table 1 presents the questionnaire distribution and retrieval rate. It shows that out of the 119 copies of the questionnaire administered to the respondents, 68 copies representing 57%, were completed and returned with valid informationand was used for the analysisas it's above 50% bench mark chosen for the study.

Table 2: mean response on Library Services Available for Marketing in University Libraries

S/N	ITEMS	Available	Not Available
1.	Lending Services	√	
2.	Reservation services	√	
3.	Translation services		X
4.	Interlibrary loan	√	
5.	Document delivery services	√	
6.	Current awareness services	√	
7.	Electronic mail services		X
8.	Bindery services	√	
9.	Referral services	√	
10	Training and consultation in the use of databases	√	
11.	User education	√	
12.	Online information services		X

13.	Literature search services	√	
14.	Book display	√	
15.	Reference services	√	
16.	Selective dissemination of information	√	
17.	Reprographic services	√	
18.	Orientation services	√	
19.	Indexing and abstracting services	√	
20.	Provision of reading and study facilities	√	

Table two clearly shows the library services that are available for marketing in the university Library. Such services like Lending Services, Reservation services, Interlibrary loan, Document delivery services, Current awareness services, Bindery services, Referral services, Training and consultation in the use of databases, User education, Literature search services, Book display, Reference services, Selective dissemination of information, Reprographic services, Orientation services, Indexing and abstracting services, Provision of reading and study facilities were all indicated to be available. While translation services, Electronic mail services, and online information services were indicated not available.

Table3: mean response on Librarians Attitude Towards Marketing of Library Information Resources and Services

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remarks
21.	Marketing is very essential library activity	18	29	11	10	**2.8**1	**A**
22.	Marketing is all about selling and promoting goods	26	32	6	4	**3.** 18	**A**
23.	Marketing is too costly for most libraries	15	30	18	2	**2.76**	**A**
24.	Marketing should be a priority to all academic libraries	12	28	24	4	**2.7**1	**A**
25.	Marketing is a waste of time and resources	7	16	37	8	**2.32**	**D**
26.	Not interested in marketing of library resources and services	12	5	45	6	**2.33**	**D**
27.	Marketing will increase user awareness towards the use of library	20	37	6	5	**3.06**	**A**
28.	Fear about marketing publicly	8	28	17	15	**2.43**	**D**
29.	Marketing is unprofessional	6	10	41	11	2. 16	**D**
30.	Marketing uses up resources that could be better used to provide more services	6	2	28	26	1.91	**D**
31.	Library services is apparent to all and should not	7	16	37	8	**2.32**	**D**

	be marketed						
32.	Marketing is only for tangible goods	-	17	41	10	**2.** 10	**D**

Keys: SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree.

Table 3 above presented the mean response of librarians on their attitude towards marketing of information resources and services with marketing is very essential library activity scoring (2.81), Marketing is all about selling and promoting goods (3.18) Marketing is too costly for most libraries (2.76) Marketing should be a priority to all academic libraries (2.71) Marketing will increase user awareness towards the use of library (3.06) Fear about marketing publicly (2.43) Marketing is unprofessional (2. 16) Marketing uses up resources that could be better used to provide more services (1.91) Library services is apparent to all and should not be marketed (2.32) Marketing is only for tangible goods (2. 10) Marketing is a waste of time and resources (2.32) Not interested in marketing of library resources and services (2.33)

Table 4: mean response onMethods Used in Marketing of Library Information Resources and Services

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remarks
33.	Exhibition and display	20	43	5	-	**3.22**	**A**
34.	Organizing trainings, seminars and workshop	23	45	-	-	**3.34**	**A**
35.	Use of social network media	7	16	37	8	**2.32**	**D**
36.	Media release through radio and television	11	38	9	10	**2.74**	**A**
37.	Creating a library webpage	-	17	41	10	**2.** 10	D
38.	Face to face interaction with users	20	41	7	-	**3.** 19	**A**
39.	Publicity through adverts and announcements	12	34	8	14	**2.65**	**A**
40.	Networking among professionals	10	28	23	7	**2.60**	**A**
41.	Sharing with an online community	12	5	45	6	**2.33**	D
42.	Displays of banners leaflets and fliers	11	38	9	10	**2.74**	**A**

Keys: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree.

Table 4 clearly presented mean response on methods used in marketing of library information resources and Services withexhibition and display scoring (3.22) organizing trainings, seminars and workshop (3.34) media release through radio and television (2.74) face to face interaction with users (3. 19) publicity through adverts and announcements (2.65) networking among professionals (2.60)displays of banners leaflets and fliers (2.74) creating a library webpage (2. 10)use of social network media (2.32)sharing with an online community (2.33)

Table5: mean response on Problems Militating Against Marketing of Library Information Resources and Services

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remarks
53.	Lack of effective communication between librarians and users	18	29	11	10	**2.8**1	**A**
54.	Inadequate fund	26	32	6	4	**3.** 18	**A**
56.	Lack of facilities to market library resources and services	15	30	18	2	**2.76**	**A**
57.	Network problem	12	28	24	4	**2.7**1	**A**
58.	Poor access to information technology	20	43	5	-	**3.22**	**A**
59.	Unavailability of local communication experts	23	45	-	-	**3.34**	**A**
60.	Inadequate telecommunication services	20	37	6	5	**3.06**	**A**
61.	Lack of internet facilities	20	43	5	-	**3.22**	**A**
62.	Conservative attitude of librarians	23	45	-	-	**3.34**	**A**
63.	Lack of proper training of librarians	20	41	7	-	**3.** 19	**A**
64.	Lack of media access to marketing of library resources and services	12	34	8	14	**2.65**	**A**
65.	Non computerization and non-automation of library resources and services	10	28	23	7	**2.60**	**A**
66.	Lack of business expertise	12	28	24	4	**2.7**1	**A**

Keys: SA = Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

Table 5 displayed mean response on Problems Militating Against Marketing of Library Information Resources and Services with Lack of effective communication between librarians and users scoring (2.81) Inadequate fund (3.18) Lack of facilities to market library resources and services (2.76) Network problem (2.71) Poor access to information technology (3.22) Unavailability of local communication experts (3.34) Inadequate telecommunication services (3.06) Lack of internet facilities (3.22) Conservative attitude of librarians (3.34) Lack of proper training of librarians (3.19) Lack of media access to marketing of library resources and services (2.65) Non computerization and non-automation of library resources and services (2.60) Lack of business expertise (2.71)

Findings

Findings of the study showed that the library services that are available for marketing in the university Library include such services like lending services, reservation services, interlibrary loan, document delivery services, current awareness services, bindery services, referral services, training and consultation in the use of databases, user education, literature search services, book

display, reference services, selective dissemination of information, reprographic services, orientation services, indexing and abstracting services, provision of reading and study facilities were all indicated to be available. While translation services, electronic mail services, and online information services were indicated not available. This finding is in-line with Gorchels (2018) who sated that libraries are saddled with a whole lot of mediums for marketing information products which ranges from current awareness services, user education, selective dissemination of information, exhibitions and document delivery services amongst others.

The study alsorevealedthat the respondents showed mixed feelings and attitudes towards marketing of information products. They responded in affirmationin suchareas of marketing like marketing is very essential library activity, marketing is all about selling and promoting good, marketing is too costly for most libraries, marketing should be a priority to all academic libraries, marketing will increase user awareness towards the use of library, while they have casualattitude in such areas like fear about marketing publicly, marketing is unprofessional, marketing uses up resources that could be better used to provide more services, library services is apparent to all and should not be marketed, marketing is only for tangible goods, marketing is a waste of time and resources, not interested in marketing of library resources and services. This corroborates the work of Saravanan (2017) in which he posited thatmany librarians though privy to the potentials and benefits drivable from marketing information product are yet to embrace it with momentousness required as some are still unprofessional and fearful about marketing publicly.

It wasalso discovered that different methods re used in marketing of library information resources and services which ranges from exhibition and display, organizing trainings, seminars and workshop, media release through radio and television, face to face interaction with users, publicity through adverts and announcements, networking among professionals, displays of banners leaflets and fliers, creating a library webpage, use of social network media, to sharing with an online community. This supports the work of Ewers and Austen (2016) as they buttressed that face to face interaction with users, exhibition and display, publicity through adverts and announcements amongst others have played effective role in marketing library and information resources.

The findings further showed that the problems militating against marketing of library information resources and services include lack of effective communication between librarians and users, inadequate fund, lack of facilities to market library resources and services, network problem, Poor access to information technology, unavailability of local communication experts, inadequate telecommunication services, lack of internet facilities, conservative attitude of librarians, lack of proper training of librarians, lack of media access to marketing of library resources and services, non-computerization and non-automation of library resources and services andlack of business expertise. This is in-line with Okon and Umoh (2014) who reported that the issue of funding, lack of training on the part of the librarian and lack of effective communicationbetween users and librarians are the worst problems confronting marketing of information products. Furthermore, the finding also corroboratesWebber (2016) who stated that

lack of facilities to market library resources and services, lack of media access to marketing of library resources and services and conservative attitude of librarians pose huge threat to information marketing.

Conclusion/Recommendations

The importance of marketing library and information services cannot be over-emphasized. However, the existence of libraries is been challenged. This is because access to information is now very fast and relies on technology. Users now prefer to turn to the internet to source for information than coming to the libraries. Libraries must therefore, redesign their services to cope with the era of information technology by changing from traditional to digital method of providing information to users. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- More funds should be allocated to develop libraries by the parent organization
- Library management should expose librarians to marketing library services through trainings, conferences, seminars, workshop and symposiums.
- Facilities that are needed for effective marketing of library services should be provided to libraries
- Marketing courses should be introduced in library school's curriculum and should be made compulsory.

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