Marketing of Library Resources by Library Staff of University Libraries in North-East, Nigeria

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Abstract
The study determined Marketing of Library Resources by Librarians in University Libraries in North-East, Nigeria. The study was guided by three (3) objectives and three (3) research questions. The target population of the study was made up of 193 librarians and Para-professional librarians of the university libraries under study. Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency distribution and percentages which were presented in tables. Findings of the study revealed that information resources were available for marketing in university libraries under study. Most of the librarians had negative attitudes toward marketing of the information resources in the libraries under study. Only few among the respondents have marketing skills for information resources in libraries under study. It was therefore recommended among others, that despite the availability of information resources for marketing, there is need for the library management to continue to update the information resources in order to remain up to date and relevant. Library staff in those selected university libraries in North East, Nigeria should develop positive attitude towards marketing of information resources in order to embrace the idea and reposition themselves to make the best out of it. Majority of library staff don't have the skills hence, they should train to acquire the requisite skills .They should show interest and approach those colleagues who have the skills to learn from them through mentoring..

Keywords: Marketing, Library Resources, Librarians, University Libraries, North-East, Nigeria

Introduction

Libraries are considered as treasures of knowledge. It is also known as storehouse of knowledge found in various forms of information resources. It is true that all libraries in the world are full of reading materials which consist of books, journals, films, images, manuscripts and audio visual materials and the preservation of the information resources is at the core of the mandate of all libraries; the need to ensure optimum use of the information resources is critical. This can be facilitated by marketing these resources which are owned by the libraries. Presently, with the aid of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) many libraries, especially the

university libraries have their own websites on which all kinds of materials can be accessed with their bibliographic details. The various ICTs infrastructures can serve as a mechanism to promote marketing of library resources and services (Olorunfemi and Ipadeola, 2018). Marketing is an approach adopted to achieve users' satisfaction. Often marketing is correlated with profit and this is does not align with the premise that libraries are non-profit making entities. However, in the 1970s, the father of marketing, Philip Kotler began focusing on marketing within non-profit entities which the library is one of such non-profit making institutions. He defined marketing as the science and art of exploring, creating and delivering value to satisfy the needs of a target market at a profit.(AI generated ,2024) .This involves analysis, planning, implementation, and control of carefully formulated programs designed to bring about voluntary exchanges of values with target markets for the purpose of achieving organizational objectives. Planning and implementation of the marketing of information resources and services in the library will make the library more effective and attractive to users. Marketing is very important in librarianship.

Marketing is an ongoing process of creating a connection between the library resources and its potential users. Research is a key element of marketing. Librarians must match what the library offers with what users want. Marketing is about relationships, about responding to the needs of others. For libraries, this means identifying patrons' needs, communicating how they can help patrons fulfil those needs, and deliver services accordingly. Library marketing is vital to keeping our users and potential users informed and educated about the resources and services that match their needs and interests. Library staff needs to have adequate marketing skills to provide the marketing of resources and services that will attract library users and make the library relevant

Effective marketing skills are needed to increase awareness of the library's value and to expand its user base. With these skills in hand as you enter the library profession, you are holding the key to your new career. Marketing is the link between the library user's needs and its resources and services; as a library marketer, you create that link. The skill of librarian in marketing library resources and services can help in connecting the library to its users. With constant competition from other information providers, librarians need to communicate to their users that they can meet their needs better than other providers. As librarians, we know that libraries are no longer store houses of more of traditional print books and the librarians are no longer silent librarians; we are changing the stereotype of libraries. Moreover libraries no longer enjoy the monopoly of information resources provision, so many competing information providers are now available, offering people opportunities to access information from the comfort of their homes and cars. Only the provision of cutting- edge services will make the library relevant and attractive. Library marketing reminds users that their library is still a great choice for meeting their information needs in today's world. Library professionals' positive attitude towards marketing is a prerequisite for a successful plan and execution to market library products and services.

Statement of Problems

Libraries are charged with the responsibility of satisfying the varying needs of its users using information resources like books and non-book materials both in print and electronic formats. The contents and features of these information resources are described and organized in the library through cataloguing and classification, indexing and abstracting to aid easy identification and retrieval. This therefore makes the library the most preferred choice and the

sole custodian of information to users in time past. In recent years however, there has been a radical change in the way information is being accessed and disseminated due to the influx of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). With the advent of ICT, individuals and groups now access and disseminate information from the comfort of their homes and therefore see little or no reason to use the library. Consequently, it has led to the under-utilization of library resources and has brought about increasing competition from private information providers, and cybercafés. By implication librarians appear to be losing relevance in the business of providing information to the users. This may be because users are not fully aware of superiority of information resources and services resulting from the application of ICTs in libraries. With these attendant challenges therefore, librarians are facing a pressing need to market information resources in order to regain and retain the users and to remain relevant in the face of the treat of abandonment.

Objectives of the Study

The study specifically intended to determine the:

1. Types of library resources available for marketing in university libraries in North-East, Nigeria
2. Attitudes of library staff toward marketing of library resources in University libraries in North-East, Nigeria.
3. Skills set library staff require to market library resources in university libraries in North-East, Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

Adequate and appropriate information resources provide opportunities for individuals to get access which depends on the availability of emerging technologies as means for creating, storing and retrieving. According to Olorunfemi and Ipadeola (2021) information resources are regarded as information bearing materials that exists in printed and electronic formats, such as journals, textbooks, abstracts, indexes, magazines, newspapers, reports, diskettes magnetic disk, the internet/Email, video, CD-ROM databases, microforms and computers. Information resources are print, non-print as well as electronic materials that can be accessed either manually or electronically by library users. Abubakar, Mallo and Suleman (2020) opined that information resources available in any library explain the need for it and why it is important in the library. In other words, the absence of relevant and up to-date materials will undermine the existence of any academic library. Furthermore, they described information resources availability as the existence of books, serials and journals publications, electronic source documents (non-print e.g. Audio-visual) in the library. In an effort to ensure availability, the library should provide adequate, current and relevant information resources that cut across all users' disciplines. This will support and help realise the goals of the parent institution. Students' success largely depends on the availability and access of information resources in order to be able to do research within the shortest time. It helps them acquire knowledge needed for their academic pursuits which facilitates exhaustive utilization of available information resources. Therefore, when a library is well stocked with several categories of information resources the students will sufficiently utilize them (Ekpang and Ekeng, 2021).

The various types and forms of e-resources in academic libraries are; e-databases, e-journals, e-data archives, e-manuscript, e-maps, e-books, e-magazines, e-thesis, WWW, e-newspapers, e-research reports, and e-bibliographic databases (Ankrah & Atuase, 2018).

According to the study of Ternenge and Kashimana (2019) electronic information resources such as e-journals, e-newspapers, Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), CD-ROM databases, e-magazines, e-books, online databases, e-research reports, virtual library online, science direct online as well as Ebscohost reference database were available for staff and students research in Francis Sulemanu Idachaba Library University of Agriculture, Makurdi.

Understanding or observing the attitude of librarians is a difficult task in any organization. Estall and Stephens (2011) examined the factors influencing the attitudes of 54 respondents at three United Kingdom (UK) universities and compared their findings to previous research in this area. An online questionnaire was sent to the library management of 16 UK universities. They used a Likert scale to assess participants' attitudes toward pro-marketing, anti-marketing, marketing knowledge, extroversion, and resistance to change statements. Follow-up interviews were conducted at the same three academic libraries to assess the current state of marketing. It appeared that all of the library staff, regardless of age, had a very positive attitude toward marketing. The respondents who were aged 55-65 and with more than 20 years of experience had the most positive attitudes. However, the percentage of complete marketing trainings was not very high. Furthermore, the researchers discovered that respondents with lower levels of resistance to change tended to have higher levels of extroversion and a more positive attitude toward marketing. Furthermore, Estall and Stephens (2011) developed a new model of marketing strategy implementation in academic libraries, indicating a positive relationship between openness to change, extroversion, and attitudes toward marketing (Estall and Stephens, 2011).

The study of Akporhonor (2020) concluded that the attitude of librarians towards marketing of library services or information resources in Colleges of Education in South-South, Nigeria was negative. In the study of Chegwe and Anaehobi (2015) it has been established that academic librarians in Delta state have a positive attitude towards marketing library services. Mohammed (2017) identified the unfriendly posture of some library staff at the circulation and reference desks as one of the circumstances that tend to ignite frustrations among library users at the Ahmadu Bello University library. The attitude of the staff towards library services delivery had great implication for user's continuous patronage of the library. Akpena (2023) examined the influence of librarian's attitudes on the marketing of information resources and services in university libraries in North Central Zone, Nigeria. The study concluded that librarians have negative attitudes towards the marketing of library resources and services. According to Ramadevi (2018) academic library staff have a high opinion as well as positive attitude towards marketing of library resources and services. The study further concluded that academic library staff are aware of marketing services which enable them to improve the services in terms of satisfying the users with library resources and services.

Librarians are expected to be competent in marketing information resources and services in the libraries. The implication of this is that the staff should have basic skills needed to participate in marketing the available information resources and services in order to increase access and utilization of the resources. Urhefe- Okotie (2023) noted that to ensure that all staff are competent in marketing of library services, administrators must ensure that all library staff are able to communicate effectively with their clients. There must be appropriate induction programs which indicate customer service techniques and ongoing trainings can be used to continue to update staff for skills development. According to New Jersey Library Association (2011), librarians are expected to have good public relation skills, competent enough to articulate ideas clearly and effectively and be able to conduct market research in order to identify user's

information needs and consequent information resources needed to meet the needs. Librarians are to join professional associations and participate actively; they should also attend conferences and workshops. There is need for staff to indulge in networking among librarians for improving librarians' competencies. The competencies required by a librarian for marketing of library services was outline by Ikolo (2018) included: project management skills needed for librarians to be able to organize and implement existing and new projects: ability to question and evaluate library services; evaluate the needs of all stakeholders, librarians need to understand how library provides services and the effect on stakeholders; vision to translate the traditional library services into the online medium; critical technologies and ability to compare technologies, Librarians should be able to compare different versions of software to figure out which will best meet their patrons' needs; ability to sell ideas/ library services .Every librarian needs serious marketing skills and salesmanship to be a librarian. On the other hand, according to Adekunmisi (2013) library personnel require the following professional knowledge and skills to market and attract users to the library: adequate perception of user needs and ability to obtain feedback from users, knowledge of various marketing strategies for promoting information skills and technical knowledge such as ability to use the internet and other electronic resources and databases. The study of Olorunfemi and Ipadeola (2018) on marketing library and information services in selected university libraries in South –West, Nigeria revealed the following as the skills required for librarians for marketing: good communication skills, information technology skills, ability to answer users query, ability to sell idea/library services, ability to question and evaluate library services and interpersonal skills.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. Descriptive survey research design according to Uhegbu (2009) is a type of design in which a researcher draws a sample to represent a large population for the study and uses questionnaire or interview to collect data from the respondents. The population of the study consists of one hundred and ninety three (193) librarians and para -professional librarians in three selected university libraries in North-East, Nigeria. The selection was made based on the year of establishment of the institution. Each of them had existed for not less than thirty (30) years. The three university libraries are: Ramat Library, University of Maiduguri; Zubairu Mohammed Library Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University of Technology, Bauchi and Ibrahim Babangida library Modibo Adama University, Yola. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire which was supplemented by a checklist used to verify availability of information resources in the university libraries under study. Data obtained from the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency distribution and percentages which was presented in tables. The instruments were face validated by four experts. The experts were requested to check the presentation of the instruments to ensure that they were free from ethical issues and matched the content with respect to the variables in the specific objectives. To establish the reliability of the study, the copies of the questionnaire were administered on 20 librarians and para-professional librarians in Borno State University Library. The scores obtained from the respondents were analysed using Cronbach Alpha to test its reliability. A reliability coefficient of 0.72 was obtained for the instrument. This showed that the instrument was reliable for use in data collection.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the types of library resources available for marketing in the university libraries in North-East, Nigeria?

Table 1: Checklist of available library resources for marketing in the university libraries under study

Library resources	Responses	
	Available	Not available
Text books	Available	Nil
Databases	Available	Nil
CD-ROM	Available	Nil
Reference materials	Available	Nil
Serial publications	Available	Nil
Audio Visual Materials	Available	Nil
Thesis and Dissertation	Available	Nil
Internet	Available	Nil
Pamphlets	Available	Nil

Research Question 2: What is the attitude of library staff towards the marketing of library resources in university libraries in North-East, Nigeria?

Table 2: Attitude of library staff towards marketing of library resources

Attitude of librarians toward marketing	SA	A	D	SD
I am unwilling to embrace marketing	50 (25.9%)	80 (41.5%)	33 (17%)	30 (15.5%)
I am not interested in the marketing activities	45 (23.3%)	88 (45.6%)	32 (16.6%)	28 (14.5%)
My attitude toward marketing can better be described as hostile	47 (24.4%)	79 (40.9%)	35 (18.1%)	32 (16.6%)
I have misconception about the marketing of library resources	46 (23.8%)	89 (46.1%)	30 (15.5%)	28 (14.5%)
I am sceptical about the use of marketing techniques in the library	40 (20.7%)	70 (36.3%)	45 (23.3%)	38 (19.7%)
I feel that marketing will increase users awareness towards the use of the library	54 (28%)	81 (42%)	40 (20.7%)	18 (9.3%)
I enjoy marketing the resources because it is useful to publicize my job	56 (29%)	74 (38.3%)	34 (17.6%)	29 (15%)
I think marketing is primarily about persuading people to use information resources they may need.	49 (25.4%)	71 (36.8%)	38 (19.7%)	35 (18.1%)

The attitude of the library staff toward marketing is not encouraging, that is why 130(67.4%) of the respondents indicated their unwillingness to participate in the marketing of the information resources while 63(32.5%) of the respondents disagreed that they are willing to embrace marketing of library resources. Most of the librarians also have no interest in the marketing as 133(68.9%) of the respondents indicated their agreement with the statement while

60(31.1%) of the respondents said they are not interested in marketing functions. The next item on the table shows the attitude of 126(65.3%) respondents meaning their attitude is hostile toward marketing of library materials. Furthermore 135(69.9%) respondents said they have misconception about marketing of library resources and 58(30%) of the respondents indicated that they did not agree with the statement. Also, 110(57%) indicated that they are sceptical about the use of marketing techniques in the library while 83(43%) of the respondents are not skeptical about the use of marketing techniques in the library. Majority of the respondents which are 135(70%) think marketing will increase users' awareness towards the use of the library and 58(30%) of the respondents did not agree. Most of the respondents indicated on the table two above that they enjoy marketing while 63(32.6%) indicated they are not enjoying marketing of information resources. Last item on the table, 120(62.2%) of the respondents said they think marketing is primarily about persuading people to use information resources while 73(37.8%) respondents said they did not agree.

Research Question 3: What are the skills set library staff require to market library resources in university libraries in North-East, Nigeria.

Table 3: The skills sets librarians required to market information resources in university libraries

Marketing Skills	SA	A	D	SD
I relate very well with users in the library	49 (25.4%)	85 (44%)	40 (20.7%)	19 (9.8%)
I have the skill to design and implement marketing strategies	25 (13%)	33 (17%)	75 (38.9%)	60 (31%)
I can communicate effectively with the users in the library	45 (23.3%)	55 (28.5%)	48 (24.9%)	45 (23.3%)
I am competent to present information resources to patrons in a way to make them use it effectively	41 (21.2%)	30 (15.5%)	57 (29.5%)	45 (23.3%)
I can confidently use ICT to provide various information resources for users	21 (10.9%)	32 (16.6%)	81 (42%)	59 (30.6%)
I am competent to introduce innovations and creativity for effective library operations	20 (10.4%)	29 (15%)	85 (44%)	58 (30%)
I am competent to locate information resources for users to have easy access	33 (17%)	40 (20.7%)	71 (36.8%)	49 (25.4%)

Table 3 above shows the marketing skills sets held by the respondents.134(69.4%) of the respondents said they relate well with the users of the library, while 59(30.5%) of the respondents said no. Only 58(30%) of the respondents said they had the skill needed to design and implement marketing strategies while 135(69.9%) of the respondents did not have the needed skills. 100(51.8%) respondents indicated that they can effectively communicate with the users in the libraries while 93(48%) of the respondents indicated they could not . Only 71(36.7%) of the respondents said they are competent to present information resources to patrons in such a way that they can use it effectively, while 102(52.8%) respondents could not . Furthermore, just 53(27.5%) of the respondents indicated their agreement that they can confidently use ICT to provide information resources for users, while 140(72.6%) said they cannot. Minority of the respondents which are 59(25.4%) said they are competent to introduce

innovations and creativity for effective library operations, while majority 143(74%) said they were unable. Minority of the respondents 73(37.7%) indicated that they are competent to locate information resources for users to have easy access but 120(62.2%) respondents lacked the skill.

Discussion of the findings

The study revealed that library resources are available for marketing in selected university libraries in North-East, Nigeria. This study concur with the finding of the study by Christopher (2013) and Ternenge and Kashimana (2019) who revealed that information resources were available in university libraries they studied and such information resources are: books, journals, e-journals, internet, CD-ROM and electronic databases.

The study also revealed most librarians in the university under study had negative attitude towards marketing of information resources. This study disagreed with the studies of Chegwe and Anaehobi (2015), Ramadevi (2018) who indicated that most of the librarians in the university libraries studied had positive attitude about marketing of information resources to the users. However, the study of Mohammed (2017) who revealed the unfriendly posture of some library staff at the circulation and reference desks to users at the Ahmadu Bello University library ,aligned with the findings of this study.

Furthermore the study revealed that only few of the respondents had the required skills for marketing in those libraries. This finding of the study contradicts that of the work of Olorunfemi and Ipadeola (2018) who maintained that skills for marketing included: good communication skills, information technology skills , ability to answer users query, ability to sell idea/library services, ability to question and evaluate library services and interpersonal skills which are critical skills needed for marketing to attract users for effective use of information resources in the library especially now that the library has many competitors.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Despite the availability of information resources that requires to be marketed, there is need for the library management to continue to review and update the information resources in order to remain current, diversified especially electronic resources that fit into what the present day users want so as to remain relevant.
2. Librarians in those selected university libraries in North East, Nigeria should have positive attitude towards marketing of library resources in order to embrace the idea.
3. The majority of librarians who lack the requisite skills should learn it by embracing the fact that information resources provided in libraries are only justified by their use and the paradigm shift requires that marketing them will ensure proper use, develop interest and approach those colleagues who have the skills to learn from them. Library management should make and implement policies on training and capacity development for marketing skill acquisition by library staff. Mentoring among staff facilitates interpersonal skills development by sharing ideas on marketing of information resources in order to improve and learn new skills from colleagues even outside the library.

Conclusion

Marketing information resources in libraries has become critical in the present landscape in which libraries operate. The ICTs driven library cannot exist without the library staff predisposing themselves to accept the change that is indispensable, stop being apathetic to

marketing and obtaining the requisite marketing skills .It is very crucial that the library staff must reposition themselves for this onerous task while the library management must develop policy statements for empowering the staff, if libraries must remain relevant and not abandoned.

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