

PROVISION OF LIBRARY PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES ON USE OF LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES IN TWO PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

The paper examined provision of library promotional activities on use of library resources and services in two public universities in Delta State. The universities are Delta State University, Abraka and Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba. The research design used for this study was descriptive survey. The target population was 110 library staff. The sample size of this study is the entire 94 respondents. The sampling method adopted for this study was the census method; the entire population was used. This was used because the study population was small. Hence, no sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire structured on a 4-point Likert Scale; adapted from Onyeke, Onyeke, Amuche, & Ibeh, (2023). 110 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents, and 79 copies (72%) were retrieved and used for the analysis. Mean and simple percentage were used in data analysis and presentation. Findings revealed that respondents were conversant with the various forms of library use promotional strategies; the mostly used promotional strategies are book display, Library events (such as author talks, workshops, and film screenings), user education programmes, and social media campaigns amongst others. The study reported the following as challenges library staff encounter in promotional activities: limited budget and resources; low awareness among users; unstable Internet connectivity, and uncooperative staff attitudes. Suggestions for improvement includes constant library exhibitions; engagement with users; and Constant evaluation and improvement of library resources use via promotional activities.

Keywords: Library promotion strategies, university library, utilization of library resources, Delta State, Nigeria, Library services

Introduction

Library clients must be informed about the information resources the library carefully obtains to meet their information needs. Materials obtained and organized by the library to satisfy its clients' information needs are known as library information resources (Adeleke, 2020). The collected materials must be put to use in order to make the library system useful and applicable to the general population. The library is essential to any research institution since it helps the parent organization's teaching, research, and instructional needs. Academic libraries have always been at the forefront of supporting higher education institutions in the areas of teaching, learning, research, and community services; as such, they are central to the mandates and missions of higher education institutions (Saka, Aliero, & Ibrahim, 2022). They are established to support the academic activities of the parent institutions. This can be accomplished by offering pertinent information resources that, when used, should satisfy users' information needs.

The library must be viewed as a marketplace! Even though promotion is not new, more deliberate efforts in library and information science promotional activities are

needed to improve the commercialization of diverse library information sciences (Otuu & Unegbu, 2022). Care must be taken and ongoing attempts must be made to try to marry the users for whom the resources are intended. Library patrons should be aware of the range of services that libraries provide as well as the ease and comfort that come with them. The marketplace connects goods and customers by acting as a hub for supply and demand. There must be greater understanding of what the library has because it provides the information resources that its patrons will require (Omeluzor & Oyovwe-Tinuoye, 2016). There is a growing worry about library use in higher education institutions, so it is necessary to inform the majority of library users about the services available.

Statement of the Problem

Libraries spend a lot of effort and money acquiring/obtaining information resources. They are the knowledge foundation from which library patrons receive services such as internet access, bindery services, current awareness services indexing and abstracting services, circulation of library information resources, etc. The materials (printed and non-printed) seem to be underutilized after the significant expenditure, turning it into a total waste. The statement of the problem in question form is: What are the promotional activities provided to enable awareness and use of library resources and services in two public university libraries in Delta State.

Research Questions

The research questions are:

1. What are the mostly used promotional strategies in Delta State University, Abraka and Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba libraries?
2. What are the challenges library staff face in promoting information resources use in Delta State University, Abraka and Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba libraries?
3. What are the strategies for improving library promotional activities in Delta State University, Abraka and Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba libraries?

Literature Review

Provision of Library Promotion Strategies to Enhance User Engagement

According to Omeluzor and Oyovwe-Tinuoye (2016), promotion is a type of communication meant to influence listeners, readers, or viewers to take action. Planning a series of promotions that will appeal to a wide range of users—students, institution employees, researchers, etc. becomes extremely challenging since library promotion is targeted at library users. Therefore, it is essential to create a promotion scheme that suits every strata in order to keep everyone moving forward.

Numerous research have confirmed that improving promotion techniques that would boost user engagement is necessary for libraries to greatly increase the effective use of information holdings (Odung & Agungi, 2023). The resources are used to meet the information demands of the library patrons for whom they were gathered. By knowing the requirements and preferences of their patrons and adjusting their promotion and

awareness-building strategies appropriately, libraries can boost engagement and guarantee that their resources and services are used to their fullest potential. Nowrin, Mostofa, and Akter (2020) added that accessing the library's resources and services, as well as being able to meet information needs, can all be used to gauge library utilization.

Abimbola and Affiong (2020) stated that library-produced materials, such as brochures, flyers, emails, websites, reading lists, newsletters, posters, and bibliographies are all used as promotional strategies. Other unique initiatives and events, such as seminars, orientation, and workshops; along with social media, such as Facebook, YouTube, blogs, and others, are used to promote library resources. Libraries should consider utilizing digital communication channels in this modern day to reach a larger audience and interact with patrons in novel ways. This is true even when conventional strategies like print advertising and face-to-face contact are crucial.

One such strategy to increase the promotion of library resources and services is the use of internet marketing techniques. Adeleke (2020) emphasized the significance of online marketing strategies in promoting library services and resources in Nigeria, stating that librarians need to develop the necessary skills to successfully sell library materials online. Otuu and Unegbu (2022) found that in Lagos State, Nigeria, university libraries' use of library information services was greatly impacted by promotional strategies. According to their investigation, increasing the use of library information services required the application of "Seven Ps" marketing strategies (product, price, place, promotion, people,

process and physical evidence). These results suggest that using online marketing strategies can increase the exposure and usage of library services and resources. Both traditional and online marketing strategies are still used to promote library services and resources.

Challenges Library Staff Face in Promoting Information Resources Use in libraries

Inadequate promotion and awareness of library resources and services has been linked in several studies to low use of the information resources accessible in the library. These studies highlight the need to promote library resources and services by addressing both traditional and internet marketing strategies. Nowrin, Mostofa, and Akter (2020) identified budgetary concerns, inadequate infrastructure, and unqualified personnel as major barriers to promotional efforts.

Chandwani (2023) equally highlighted the following as hurdles to outreach/library promotion programmes; these are: finance, lack of community knowledge, inadequate infrastructure (Internet), and reluctance to change amongst others. According to Dada et al.'s (2025) survey, librarians face a number of difficulties, including insufficient funding, a lack of marketing expertise, linguistic and cultural barriers, and a lack of resources. Furthermore, the researchers noted lack of marketing strategy, limited facilities, and money as obstacles libraries confront in their promotional operations. They advocated for user-focused marketing methods. Dada et al. (2025) identified low network access, privacy concerns, and inadequate funding as the primary problems.

Strategies for Improving Library Promotional Activities in University Libraries

For marketing strategies to be effective, they must be included into the library's mission and goals. In order to make sure that marketing tactics are targeted, consistent, and linked to the broader purpose, Adeleke (2020) emphasized the importance of connecting marketing efforts with the library's goal and objectives. Additionally, the success of marketing plans depends on librarians' participation in their implementation. Adeleke (2020) further emphasized the need for libraries to create comprehensive marketing plans that include target audience analysis, clear goals and objectives, targeted marketing strategies, and success metrics. Libraries may make sure that their marketing campaigns are successful in raising awareness of and encouraging use of its resources and services by adopting a strategic approach.

According to Chukwusa (2019), in order to increase target audience awareness and utilization, librarians need to be proactive about marketing library resources and services. The scholar further emphasized the necessity of librarians' participation in marketing operations, contending that their involvement is essential to the success of marketing initiatives. Libraries may increase the efficacy of their marketing campaigns and raise utilization by providing librarians with the necessary knowledge and abilities. Chandwani (2023) highlighted the following (Webinars and virtual workshop, Social media engagement, Online book clubs as well as reading groups, Virtual tours and exhibits, Online resources and tutorials) as ways through which libraries promote library resources use.

Additionally, using free marketing tools, fostering an innovative culture, improving communication channels, enlisting marketing experts, carrying out awareness campaigns, offering technology training, and creating multilingual resources are all strategies to overcome these challenges, according to Dada et al. (2025). In order to close the skill gap and enable staff for successful outreach, the researchers suggested that library management provide regular training for librarians in marketing tactics and user engagement techniques. University administrations should also provide adequate funds, recognize marketing as an essential library role, and formally include library marketing in institutional growth plans.

Research Methodology

The research design used for this study was descriptive survey. The target population was 110 library staff. The sample size of this study is the entire 94 respondents. The sampling method adopted for this study was the census method; the entire population was used. This was used because the study population was small. Hence, no sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire structured on a 4-point Likert Scale adapted from Onyeke, Onyeke, Amuche, & Ibeh, (2023). 110 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents, and 79 copies (72%) were retrieved and used for the analysis. Mean and simple percentage were used in data analysis and presentation.

Results and Discussions

Table 1: The Institutions Studied

| Institutions | Academic Librarians | Non-Teaching Staff | Total |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Delta State University, Library, Abraka | 17 | 54 | 71 |
| Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba. | 10 | 19 | 39 |
| Total | | 110 | |

Table 1 showed the institutions studied and the number of staff therein. Delta State University, Abraka had 17 academic and 54 non-teaching staff totaling 71 staff. On the other hand, Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba recorded 10 academic and 19 non-teaching totaling 39 staff. Total population 110 staff. However, 79 (72%) respondents formed the sample size.

Research Question One: What are the mostly used promotional strategies to enhance the use of library resources and services in your library?

Table 2: Mostly Used Promotional Strategies to Enhance the Use of Library Resources and Services

| S/N | ITEMS | SA | A | D | SD | Mean Score |
|-----|---|----|----|----|----|------------|
| 1. | Library events (such as author talks, workshops, and film screenings) | 42 | 31 | 6 | - | 3.5 |
| 2. | Suggestion boxes | 18 | 42 | 9 | 10 | 2.9 |
| 3. | Social media campaigns (book recommendations, book reviews). | 37 | 42 | - | - | 3.4 |
| 4. | Collaboration with other libraries | 8 | 9 | 54 | 8 | 2.2 |
| 5. | Contests and giveaways | 5 | 7 | 45 | 23 | 1.9 |
| 6. | User survey studies | 16 | 11 | 42 | 10 | 2.5 |
| 7. | Library newsletters | 14 | 3 | 51 | 3 | 2.2 |
| 8. | Library tours | - | - | 67 | 12 | 1.8 |
| 9. | Promotional materials (bookmarks, and the use of posters, and flyers | 40 | 23 | 10 | 6 | 3.2 |
| 10. | Book display | 53 | 12 | 14 | - | 3.5 |
| 11. | User education programmes | 40 | 35 | 4 | - | 3.4 |

Grand Mean Score

3.0

Adapted from Onyeke, Onyeke, Amuche, & Ibeh, (2023)

Table 2 revealed that aside Library tours 1.8; contests and giveaways 1.9; library newsletters 2.2; and Collaboration with other libraries 2.2, all other items had mean scores above the mandatory 2.5 cutoff point. Therefore, the mostly used promotional strategies to enhance the use of library resources and services as revealed in Table 3 are Book display 3.5, Library events (such as author talks, workshops, and film screenings) 3.5, User education programmes 3.4, and Social media campaigns (book recommendations, book reviews) 3.4 amongst others.

The theme of the current study is different from that of Abubakar and Buba's (2024), which looked at the transformational impact of information technology on the marketing strategies of Nigerian university libraries. Nevertheless, the study uses a mixed-methods approach to determine the extent of IT adoption, identify mostly used technology, and assess their effects on user engagement and library usage. According to the research, commonly utilized IT technologies—such as social media platforms, mobile apps, and library management systems—are essential for improving services, promoting communication, and growing the user base.

Research Question Two: What are the challenges library staff face in promoting information resources use in these libraries?

Table 3: Challenges Library Staff Face in Promoting Information Resources in Libraries

| S/N | ITEMS | SA | A | D | SD | Total | Mean Score |
|-----|--|----|----|----|----|-------|------------|
| 1. | Competition from other sources | 10 | 8 | 46 | 15 | 79 | 2.2 |
| 2. | Unstable Internet connectivity | 19 | 47 | 2 | 11 | 79 | 3.0 |
| 3. | Technological barrier (bandwidth) | 22 | 31 | 6 | 20 | 79 | 3.0 |
| 4. | Lack of marketing (promotion) skills | 32 | 24 | 8 | 11 | 79 | 2.6 |
| 5. | Notion that promotion is not a library Objective | 9 | 11 | 34 | 25 | 79 | 2.1 |
| 6. | User needs and preferences | 17 | 29 | 21 | 12 | 79 | 2.6 |
| 7. | Uncooperative staff attitudes | 43 | 21 | - | - | 79 | 3.0 |
| 8. | Low awareness among users | 24 | 42 | 13 | - | 79 | 3.1 |
| 9. | Limited budget and resources | 38 | 26 | 15 | - | 79 | 3.3 |
| | Grand Mean Score | | | | | | 2.7 |

Table 3 showed Challenges library staff face in promoting use of information resources and services in libraries. Most of the items had mean score above 2.5. The table revealed that Limited budget and resources 3.3; Low awareness among users 3.1; Unstable Internet connectivity, and Uncooperative staff attitudes 3.0 respectively were the major challenges library staff encounter in promotional activities amongst others. The results of this investigation were largely consistent with those of Mohammed and Abbas (2021).

According to their research, social media tools were mostly ignored and the methods and resources employed in library use promotion were deemed to be insufficient. Other extra challenges libraries encountered in encouraging the use of their services were found to be inadequate facilities, a lack of funding, a personnel shortage and lack of

marketing expertise, and a lack of marketing policies. According to Rita (2016), there are three particularly concerning elements that influence marketing initiatives in numerous libraries; financial challenges, insufficient funding for promotional efforts, and poor user-library staff interactions are some of these causes.

Research Question Three: What are the strategies for improving library promotional activities in the University Libraries studied?

Table 4: Strategies for Improving Library Promotional Activities

| S/N | ITEMS | SA | A | D | SD | Total | Mean Score |
|-----|---|----|----|----|----|-------|------------|
| 1. | Constant awareness campaign | 12 | 67 | - | - | 79 | 3.2 |
| 2. | Provide personalized services | 23 | 44 | 12 | - | 79 | 3.0 |
| 3. | Adequate internet (bandwidth) for Online use of social media platforms. | 19 | 43 | 12 | - | 79 | 3.0 |
| 4. | Developing promotional strategies such as exhibitions | 36 | 43 | - | - | 79 | 3.5 |
| 5. | Engage with users | 42 | 30 | - | 7 | 79 | 3.5 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|------------|-----|
| 6. Offering incentives to users | 22 | 23 | 25 | 9 | 79 | 2.7 |
| 7. Adequate funding | 17 | 44 | 12 | 6 | 79 | 2.9 |
| 8. Constant evaluation and improvement of library resources promotional activities | 38 | 41 | - | - | 79 | 3.5 |
| 9. Engaging stakeholders | 23 | 21 | 25 | 10 | 79 | 2.7 |
| Grand Mean Score | | | | | 3.4 | |

Adapted from Onyeke, Onyeke, Amuche, & Ibeh, (2023)

Table 4 reported the strategies for improving library promotional activities in University Libraries. All the items listed in the table had mean score above the mandatory mean score cutoff point (2.5). This means that they are all promotional strategies; but the most prominent amongst them are: Developing promotional strategies such as exhibitions; Engage with users, and Constant evaluation and improvement of library resources promotional activities with 3.5 mean score respectively. This finding corroborates Obiamalu, Aghauche, and Nwofor (2024) who suggested that university administration should increase funding for efficient operation of the library so that the management can purchase ICTs and devices for the marketing of their resources. Additionally, in order to sell their resources and services to a wider audience outside of their local library, librarians should develop their online marketing abilities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations can be drawn:

- a. Sustenance of the major promotional activities identified in this study.
- b. Social media campaigns (book recommendations, book reviews), library events (such as author talks, workshops, and film screenings), and book display should be intensified in the library promotion/marketing activities.
- c. Adequate funding of library promotion activities is necessary to enable resolving unstable Internet connectivity. This is because in this age and time social media can be of help in marketing library resources and services.
- d. Constant evaluation and improvement of library resources promotional activities and awareness programmes using strategies that consider library patrons' specific needs as well as preferences.

Conclusions

The study concluded by identifying 9 out of 11 library marketing/library use promotion activities that must be sustained. There is the need for all stakeholders to take the use of library resources and services serious; so that the limited funds provided will not be a waste. Regardless of financial constraints, library use promotion can continue to be successful, enabling libraries to develop significant projects without incurring significant costs. Digital resources including social media platforms, email newsletters, and community can be used by university libraries at minimal cost.

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