

**MARKETING STRATEGIES AS CORRELATES OF THE USE OF LIBRARY
INFORMATION RESOURCES BY UNDERGRADUATES IN NIGER DELTA
UNIVERSITY (NDU), BAYELSA STATE.**

By

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Abstract

The study examined marketing strategies and the use of library information resources by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State. Broadly, the aim of the study was to examine the relationship between the marketing strategies and the use of library information resources by undergraduate students in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State. Two research objectives and questions were stated to guide the study. Two hypotheses were also formulated. The study employed survey and correlational research design involving a population of 5,836 students of 2019/2020 academic session that registered with the library. A sample of 374 students was used for the study. Marketing Strategies and the Use of Library Information Resources Questionnaire (MSULIRQ) was used to collect data. The research adopted mean and standard deviation as descriptive statistics while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer the research questions. The result from the data analysis discloses that user education as a marketing strategy enhanced the use of library information resources by undergraduates in NDU; and print media as a marketing strategy increased the use of library information resources by undergraduates in NDU; there exists a strong positive relationship between user education and the use of library information resources. The researchers recommend among others that library use instructional programmes should be incorporated into both first and second semesters of the academic sessions and should be made an independent credit carrying course under the umbrella of general studies programme.

Keywords: Marketing, User Education, Print, Information Resources, Undergraduates
Introduction

A library is a collection of print and non-print materials carefully selected, processed or organized and preserved for dissemination by well qualified personnel in librarianship. The objective of the university library is to support teaching, learning and research of staff, students and other users. For the library users to know the

holdings or information resources that are available in the library there is need for marketing its resources (products) for efficient and effective utilization of the available resources.

Marketing is a considerable element to promote libraries, a means of increasing awareness and usage of library resources and facilities among the targeted users. If librarians and libraries must stand the test of time, then marketing must be seen as an indispensable tool in library services. In the light of this, Aderigbe and Farouk (2017) assert that there is always the feeling that library related information should be marketed because the library is a social agency established to serve the educational and informational needs of the society.

Libraries, with the adoption of marketing principles in the provision of services will now become client-oriented which is the reason for their establishment rather than product-oriented when they develop their collections without considering the information needs of the users nor the creations of awareness of the resources and services of the library. The concept of marketing being applied to the library adds a new dimension to the profession. Kolter and Keller (2005) stated that marketing strategy for library resources and services is much more relevant, when the area of marketing itself is being redesigned to create and sustain more customers through creative anticipation and response style marketing. Certain strategies are adopted in marketing.

The term strategy refers to a plan of action, a plan for doing or organizing something. Walker and Mullins (2014) describes strategy as a fundamental pattern of

present and planned objectives, resource developments and interactions of an organization with markets, competitors, and other environmental factors. They argued that a well-developed strategy should contain a set of issues such as a well-defined scope, well-articulated goals and objectives, resource developments, identification of a suitable competitive advantage and synergy. Marketing strategy primarily focuses on effectively allocating and coordinating marketing resources and activities to accomplish the firm's objectives within a specified product-market. This means that the major thing about marketing strategy is to specify the target market(s) for a particular product line. Secondly, the firms want to get competitive advantage over others through a well-integrated program of marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion) in line with the needs and wants of potential customers in that target market.

It is relevant in this study to examine the relationship between marketing strategies and the use of library resources in university libraries. This study is therefore set out to investigate the relationship between marketing strategies and the use of library information resources in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State.

Statement of the Problem

With the rapid increase in Information and Communication Technology, the manner with which libraries and information centres offer their services have changed drastically and have placed librarians on the part of rising competition. Librarians are now compelled in order to compete, survive and contribute to compete in the world of information service and for their objectives to be actualized. It has been observed that

under-graduate students under-utilize the library and its resources. It has also been noted that most under-graduate students fail to use the library; some only come to register with the library just to avoid payment during their clearance after graduation. It is likely that some do not make use of the library at all.

It seems that marketing of library services have not been taken to be a priority in library service delivery. This has been obviously seen through lack of proper dissemination of library services to the target users which has resulted in inadequate use of the library resources and service.

If libraries do not market their products and services, what then will become of their fate in this 21st century that so many other media now compete with the library in providing information to users? Lack of marketing will make the library irrelevant and may likely go moribund. In order to exist and remain relevant in the on-going growth of new information age, with the use of android phones and so no, libraries must adopt marketing principles and strategies in their operations. It is on this ground that this study is out to investigate the relationship between the marketing strategies used by the university libraries and the use of library resources by under-graduate students in the Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State.

Objectives of the Study

Broadly, the aim of this study is to examine the relationship between the marketing strategies and use of library information resources by under-graduate students in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State. Specifically, this study seeks to:

1. determine the relationship between the use of user education as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by a undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State.
2. evaluate the relationship between the use of print media as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State.

Research Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses are formulated for this study:

Ho₁: There is no significance relationship between user education as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State.

Ho₂: There is no significance relationship between print media as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State universities.

Literature Review

Marketing has been adopted and used by diverse organizations including libraries. Osinulu, Adekunmisi, Okewale and Oyewusi (2018) affirm that marketing in the context of libraries involves provision of library resources and services, using various tools likewise technologies in order to create awareness, attract and improve the use of the library resources and services by patrons.

Ibenne (2018) explained that any inanimate medium that information is stored or through which it may be obtained, qualifies as an information resource. Information

resources are those materials that bear information or carry information which involve aspects of the recorded knowledge of humanity and from which seekers of information of all kinds may acquire needed information in their peculiar fields of interest. Information resources in the library are made up of print, non-print and electronic materials.

Effective marketing strategies enhance patrons' awareness, like wise promote use of the holdings of the library and its services and ultimately the value of the library and its personnel image. Adekunmisi in Fyneman (2018) stated some reasons libraries need to market their services. They are: to promote the image of their libraries; ensure optimum use of the library and promote the image and status of the library and library professionals among others.

There are many strategies which university libraries can employ to market their products and services. Edom and Edom (2019) suggested the use of prints such as posters, handbills, and leaf-lets carefully written to introduce the products and services provided by the library. They also stated that any library intending to engage in marketing its services and product should adopt public relations programmes. Fyneman (2018) identified the following as strategies in marketing library resources in Nigeria: networking through its services, advertisements, websites, printing fliers and newsletters among others. Adegoke (2015) identified Current Awareness Service (CAS), exhibition and displays, user education, online dissemination of information using internet technology as ways of marketing library products and services. This

research is concentrating on only the use of user education and print media as marketing strategies.

User education is the acquisition of various skills relevant to the identification of and familiarity with information sources, usually through formal bibliographic instruction and informal education. Users of the library should be equipped with the basic skills needed to locate information sources. Thus, it is aimed at equipping the library user with the skills needed in locating information sources in the library. It is also a means of educating users or an introduction given to users to help them make the best use of the library (Folorunso & Njoku cited in Ukoha & Udo-Anyanwu, 2019). It comprises all activities undertaken to help library users become efficient information users. The authors discovered that user education impacted positively on the use of library resources by undergraduate students and their academic performance. This was further confirmed by the study of Odu and Edam-Agbor (2018) on library use instruction and the pattern of utilization of library services by undergraduates in the University of Calabar, Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed among other things that the understanding about library use instruction programme by users in the university under study was high which have influenced high level of patronage of the library services. However, the study of Ogunmodede, Adio and Odunola (2011) revealed that the introduction of user education to the students had not made much impact.

The word 'print' indicates written by machine and the term media relates to mode of communication. Print media is one of the oldest and primary forms of mass

communications. Print materials are information carriers that are printed as texts on paper such as books, pamphlets, magazines, journals and newspapers (Ibenne, 2018). They are information carriers on books, pamphlets and serial publications. The most vital and significant aim of print media is to share information as a written interface to a strictly targeted group of people for whom the particular piece of information or data is meant for originally.

The various print media used in marketing include the following: newspapers, magazines, billboards and posters, direct mail (letters and post cards), pamphlets, newsletters, sign boards, transit posters, flyers, yellow pages. Prabhakar and Rani (2017) in their study on influence of social networking sites on library and information centres discovered that that flyers, posters and other print media remained the most frequently used. Aiawadhi and Al-Daihani (2019) in their own study investigated marketing academic library information services using print media and found that librarians of academic institutions have a positive view about the use of print media for marketing.

Research Methodology

The study adopted survey and correlational research design. The population of this study is 5,836 students comprised of all undergraduate students of 2019/2020 academic session in the Niger Delta University that are registered with the library. A sample of 374 undergraduates was derived using Taro Yamene's statistical formular. The instrument for data collection was a researcher made questionnaire rating using the four-point Likert scale. The method used in analyzing the data collected for this

research was descriptive statistic which are mean, mode and standard deviation. Pearson Moment correlation coefficient was used to answer some of the research questions.

Results

Out of the 374 copies of questionnaire administered to the students, 358 showing 95.7% return rate were retrieved and were also used for the analysis of this study.

Table 1: Extent to which User Education as a Marketing Strategy Enhances the Use of Library Information Resource by Undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State.

SN	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1	General orientation given to students has a positive influence on their (students) use of library information resources.	3.51	.52241	**
2	Library tour given to students has a positive influence on their use of library information resources.	3.54	.54220	**
3	Bibliographic instruction given to students positively affects their use of information resources in the library.	2.96	.70866	**
4	The introduction of library science in the school scheme of work affects the use of library information resources by students.	3.34	.60443	**
5	User awareness programmes for students in the library affect the use of library information resources by students positively.	3.61	.57255	**
	Grand mean	3.39	.59005	**

** Agreed. * Disagreed.

Source: Field Survey, (2021)

Table 1 shows the impact of user education as a marketing strategy on the use of library information resource by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU),

Bayelsa State. The result shows that the grand mean = 3.39 ± 0.59005 is greater than the criterion mean = 2.5 indicating that user education as a marketing strategy enhanced the use of library information resource by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State. The items which enhanced academic performance include: General orientation given to students ($\bar{X} = 3.51 \pm 0.52241$); Library tour given to students ($\bar{X} = 3.54 \pm 0.54220$); Bibliographic instruction given to students positively ($\bar{X} = 2.96 \pm 0.70866$); The introduction of library science in the school scheme of work ($\bar{X} = 3.34 \pm 0.60443$), and User awareness programmes for students in the library ($\bar{X} = 3.61 \pm 0.57255$).

Table 2: Extent to which Print Media as a Marketing Strategy Enhances the Use of Library Information Resource by Undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State.

SN	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1	The use of flyers as a means of marketing library information resources promotes the use of library resources by students.	3.30	.70814	*
2	Billboards and posters as means of advertising library information resource promote students' use of library resources.	3.28	.73895	**
3	The use of magazines as means of marketing library information resources promotes the use of library resources by students.	3.17	.66515	**
4	The use of direct mail as means of marketing library information resources promotes the use of library resources by students.	2.92	.70741	**
5	The use of pamphlets as a means of marketing library information resources promotes the use of library resources by students.	3.11	.67266	**
	Grand mean	3.16	.69846	**

** Agreed. * Disagreed.

Source: Field Survey, (2021)

Table 2 shows the impact of print media as a marketing strategy on the use of library information resource by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State. The result shows that the grand mean = 3.16 ± 0.69846 is greater than the criterion mean = 2.5 indicating that print media as a marketing strategy enhanced the use of library information resource by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State. The items which enhanced academic performance include: The use of flyers as a means of marketing library information resources ($\bar{X} = 3.30 \pm 0.70814$); Billboards and posters as means of advertising library information resource ($\bar{X} = 3.28 \pm 0.73895$); The use of magazines as means of marketing library information resources ($\bar{X} = 3.17 \pm 0.66515$); The use of direct mail as means of marketing library information resources ($\bar{X} = 2.92 \pm 0.70741$), and The use of pamphlets as a means of marketing library information resources ($\bar{X} = 3.11 \pm 0.67266$).

Testing of Hypotheses

Table 3: Relationship between User Education and the Use of Library Information Resources

		Correlations		
		User Education	Library Information Resources	Decision
User Education	Pearson Correlation	1	.634	Rejected
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	358	358	
Library Information Resources	Pearson Correlation	.634	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	358	358	

***S= Significant p<0.05**

Source: Field Survey, (2021)

The result from SPSS analysis, shows the relationship between user education as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State. Pearson correlation coefficient demonstrates a strong positive relationship between the two variables $r=.634$, indicating that there exists a strong positive relationship between user education as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates, the null hypothesis which states that there is no relationship between user education as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis upheld [(P =.000) $p<0.05$].

Table 4: Relationship between print media and the use of library information resources

		Correlations		
		Print Media	Library Information Resources	Decision
Instructional Methodologies	Pearson Correlation	1	.469	Rejected
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	
	N	358	358	
Print Media	Pearson Correlation	.469	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	358	358	

***S= Significant p<0.05**

Source: Field Survey, (2021)

The result from SPSS analysis, shows the relationship between print media as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State universities. Pearson correlation coefficient demonstrates a moderate positive relationship between the two variables $r=.469$, indicating that there exists a moderate positive relationship between print media as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates, the null hypothesis which states that there is no relationship between print media as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State universities was rejected and the alternate hypothesis upheld [$P = .000$] $p < 0.05$].

Discussion of Findings

User education as a marketing strategy and library information resources

Findings from the study showed that there was significant relationship between user education as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State. The findings gathered from the study disclose that user education impacted positively on the use of library resources by undergraduate students and their academic performance. The methods adopted in teaching user education include lecture method, independent assignment and practical exercises etc. Also, Odu and Edam-Agbor (2018) carried out a study on library use instruction and the pattern of utilization of library services by undergraduates in the University of Calabar, Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed among other things that the understanding about library use instruction

programme by users in the university under study was high which have influenced high level of patronage of the library services.

Print media as a marketing strategy and library information resources

This study showed that there was significant relationship between print media as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State universities. The finding is in line with the discovery on influence of social networking sites on library and information centres was carried out by Prabhakar and Rani (2017). The research focused on current development in the area of library science that involves the use of social networks and print media as means of dissemination information to users. The findings of the study indicates that flyers, posters and other print media remained the most frequently used while social media visual channels such as Youtube was increasing in rapid patronage.

Recommendations

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

1. Library use of instruction programmes should be carried out both in first and second semesters of the academic sessions and should be made an independent credit carrying course under the umbrella of general studies programme.
2. Every effort should be made to preserve the print media as it is a useful tool in marketing library products and services.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that user education as a marketing strategy enhanced the use of library information resource by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State; and print media as a marketing strategy enhanced the use of library information resource by undergraduates in Niger Delta University (NDU), Bayelsa State. The results showed that there exists a strong positive relationship between user education as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates; and there exists a moderate positive relationship between print media as a marketing strategy and the use of library information resources by undergraduates.

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