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MARKETING OF DIGITAL INFORMATION RESOURCES AND SERVICES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES FOR SUSTAINABLE READING HABITS IN GOMBE STATE, NORTHEAST NIGERIA.

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Abstract
This study investigated marketing digital information resources and services (DIRS) in academic libraries for sustainable reading habits in Gombe State, Northeast Nigeria. Three major objectives of this study identified the types of digital information resources and services available in academic libraries for sustainable reading habits in Gombe state; the study finds out that the problems associated with marketing of digital information resources and services in academic libraries as well as determining the strategies for enhancing marketing of digital information resources and services in academic libraries. Three research questions were used. The population of the study is Ninety five (95) Librarians and computer/ICT professionals working in the Libraries in all tertiary institutions in Gombe State. The study used purposive (or judgmental) sampling. The study used descriptive survey research design. The instruments used for the study are observation check list and questionnaire for librarians, ict/computer professionals. The questionnaire was titled marketing digital information resources and services (MADRIS) in academic libraries. The data collected were analyzed using statistical package to analyses the mean and standard deviation. The findings of the study revealed the availability of DIRS in academic libraries in Gombe state, Nigeria, the extent use of such available DIRS, also the findings of this study revealed the problems associated with marketing DIRS as well as the strategies that enhances marketing DIRS in academic libraries in Gombe state, Northeast Nigeria.

Keywords: *Marketing, Digital Information Resources and Services, Academic Libraries and Reading Habits*

Introduction

Marketing of Digital Information Resources and Services (DIRS) in Academic Libraries has become an area of interest among the practicing Librarians in this Digital age, as a result of tremendous role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Library and Information Profession. The adoption of marketing strategies and tactics in Librarianship is very paramount for sustainable reading habits in Gombe state. With regards to the changing in roles, services demand and services delivery between users of Library and the Librarians brings a way to the establishment of marketing concept in Librarianship. Feather and Sturges (2008) defined marketing in Librarianship as an activity such as identifying user's information needs, designing suitable services or products to meet their information needs. From the definition above it is clear that marketing is not all about profit making rather it is a strategy of attracting or informing people about your product and services.

Similarly, Sharma and Bhardwaj (2021) defined marketing as a total system of interacting business activities to plan, promote and distribute want satisfying products and services to present and potential customers. Kotler and Armstrong (2007) viewed Marketing as a process that involves systematic evaluation of users' needs and designing information, products and services to satisfy the needs. As such, the establishment of academic library in any tertiary institutions aims at providing and satisfying users information needs.

Nevertheless, Academic Libraries are Libraries attached to tertiary institutions such as Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges, and other institutions of higher learning established in order to provide and sustain the information needs for academic and non-academic staff, students and researchers (Omekwu, 2018). Academic Libraries support the mission and vision of their parent institutions. According to Omekwu (2019) further postulated that Academic Library is a Library that is attached, domiciled or situated in an institution of higher learning which serves two complimentary purposes: to support the school's curriculum, and to support the research of the university faculty and students. In Nigerian context, all Libraries that exist in the universities, polytechnics, colleges and other institutions of higher learning are called Academic Libraries. Academic libraries are academic institutions where users of information develop reading habits.

Reading is an attempt on the part of reader to understand a writer's message. Reading is a precise process. It involves exact, detailed, sequential perception and identification of letters, words, spelling patterns and to comprehend language units. Reading improves student better performance in the field of study. The activity of reading is regarded as a habit when it is repeatedly

carried out. In measurable terms reading habits is often considered in terms of the amount of materials being read, the frequency of reading as well as the average time spent on reading, and this habit can be cultivated. Reading, which is a long-term habit starting with the very early ages, is the prominent gateway to the knowledge room. Reading is an access to social, economic and civic life (Clark and Rumbold, 2011).

Reading habit refers to the behavior which expresses the likeness of reading of individual types of reading and tastes of reading. It is a pattern with which an individual organizes his or her reading in terms of the type, content, and quantity of materials read, the reading frequency and the average time spent on reading. A person with a good reading habit makes reading a regular activity. According to Azikiwe (2019), reading habit is the adopted way and manner a student plans his private readings, after classroom learning so as to attain mastery of the subject. Readers of 21 century are more concern on reading digital information resources.

Digital Information Resources (DIRs) are those information resources that appear in soft copy and are accessible through computers and other electronic tools. Similarly, Obaseki, Umeji & Krubu, (2010) postulated that Digital Information Resources (DIRs) includes music's, games, stories, articles, magazines, published journals and books, encyclopedias, pamphlets, cartographic materials and other published resources that are in soft copies. Digital Information Resources (DIRs) is the presence of printed information in a format only viewed and accessed through the use of ICT via electrical manipulations (Obaseki and Amune, 2009).

Digital information services are modern Library services that provide remote access through computer system and other Telecommunication gadgets. As such, the application of DIS requires integration of several information technologies (Chisenga, 2004). In the same vein, Chisenga (2009) postulated that Information and Communication Technology has influenced library activities ranging from information capture, acquisition, organization, storage and dissemination of information to its clientele. Digital Information Services in Library and information profession has become a favorite issue with the end users, whether students, researchers, faculties or Corporate World. Getting the required information in no time just with the click at users door step has brought a revolutionary progress in the area of Library and Information Sciences in this 21st century. The main focus of the Digital Information Service is to get the right information at the right time to the right users in the right format at the right place.

Statement of the Problem

Digital Information Resources and Services facilitate learning especially to

the Library Users. Such information resources and services improve easy access, retrieval and use of information, also improve academic excellent through the adoption of Reading Habits. Despite the fact from the marketing opportunities in Academic Libraries, Library users do not maximize the use of such materials.

It has been observed that there is low patronage and underutilization of Library Resources in Academic Libraries and the reading habit is gradually reducing which affect the academic performance and productivity. It also become a tradition, Library users now mostly rely on internet for their assignment and other academic activities which may result to poor academic performance, this also affect their academic performance, not knowing that a lot of opportunities are there in Digital information resources and Services. The application of Marketing Digital Information Resources and Services in Academic Libraries in Gombe state is very necessary because without due consideration, the Reading Habits and the uses of Library Resources is gradually reducing, as such may lead to poor Academic performance. And even affect the practice of the Professional Librarians to lost value and prestige is a society. With the present situation of Academic Libraries in Gombe state Nigeria, Marketing Digital Information Resources and Services is an indispensable tool for sustainable Reading Habits in Gombe state, Northeast Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study investigated the marketing of Digital information Resources and services to sustain reading habits in Gombe state, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Find out the challenges associated with Marketing Digital information resources and Services in Academic Libraries for Sustainable Reading Habits in Gombe state, Nigeria.
2. Determine strategies for enhancing Marketing of Digital Information Resources and services in Academic Libraries for Sustainable Reading habits in Gombe state, Nigeria.

Research Questions

Three research questions guided the investigation

1. What are the challenges associated with Marketing of Digital information resources and Services in Academic Libraries for Sustainable Reading Habits in Gombe state, Nigeria?
2. What are the strategies for enhancing Marketing of Digital Information Resources and services in Academic Libraries for Sustainable Reading habits in Gombe state, Nigeria?

Research Methodology

Descriptive survey design was used in carrying out this study. The area of the study is Gombe State, North-Eastern part of Nigeria. The population of the study comprises all Ninety five (95) librarians and computer/ICT professionals working in academic libraries, in Gombe state Nigeria. This study adopted Purposive (or judgmental) Sampling. Three (3) tertiary Institutions were selected out of 12 Tertiary Institutions in Gombe State for the study which are: Federal University Kashere (FUK), Gombe state University (GSU) and Federal College of Education Technical (FCET), Gombe. Meanwhile, the main reasons for selecting such three (3) tertiary Institutions in Gombe State is that, these are the only Tertiary institutions digitized and operating with digital information Resources and Services in their Libraries; and this current Study has to do with Digital Information Resources and Services; as such these three (3) selected Institutions are suitable for the study. And also these are the Institutions that have high population of Library Staff and Students in Gombe state. The total Population of Librarians and computer/ICT professionals working in the Libraries in the three (3) selected Tertiary Institutions in Gombe State under study is Seventy (70) and all were covered because the total number is manageable. The total distributions of the population of such three (3) selected Tertiary Institutions are: Sixty two (62) Librarians and Eight (8) computer/ICT professionals. The Instruments used for Data collection were observation check list and Questionnaire. Mean and standard deviation will be used to analyze Data that were collected.

Data Analysis

The result of this study is presented below, and the summary of the major findings is presented at the end of each table.

Research Question 1: What are the challenges associated with marketing digital information resources and services in academic libraries for sustainable reading habits in Gombe State?

Table 1: ***Mean and Standard Deviation of Library Staff on challenges Associated with Marketing Digital Information Resources and Services for Sustainable Reading Habits***

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

s/n	Item Statement	FUK		GSU		FCET		Mean Sum		R	Dec
			±	X	±	X	±				
1	Lack of Digital Marketing strategic skills among Librarians	3.90	.30	3.90	.30	3.17	.80	3.68	.60	2nd	**SA**
2	Poor Digital Information facilities in the Libraries	3.90	.30	3.70	.47	3.23	.66	3.63	.55	4th	**SA**
3	Inadequate Fund to carryout Marketing effectively	3.95	.22	3.80	.41	3.29	.58	3.70	.59	1st	**SA**
4	Lack of Digital Marketing Training	3.85	.36	3.70	.47	3.47	.87	3.68	.60	2nd	**SA**
5	Lack of Digital Marketing policies in the Libraries	3.85	.36	3.70	.57	3.35	.78	3.64	.61	3rd	**SA**
		Cluster Mean						**3.66**	**.57**		**SA**

FUK = Federal University Kashere, GSU = Gombe State University, FCET = Federal College of Education Technical, X = Mean; ± Standard Deviation; Mean Sum = Mean Summation; R = Rank; Dec = Decision; SA = Strongly Agree

Table 1 presents result of the challenges associated with marketing digital information resources and services in academic libraries for sustainable reading habits in Gombe State. It shows that all the identified problems were rated strongly agree such as inadequate fund to carryout marketing effectively, lack of digital marketing strategic skills among librarians, lack of digital marketing training, lack of digital marketing policies in the libraries, and poor digital

information facilities in the libraries (3.70 – 3.63). The cluster mean 3.66 ±57 shows that the librarians strongly agree that the identified problems are associated with marketing digital information resources and services for sustainable reading habits of the students. The standard deviation scores .61 - .55 shows low dispersion rate among the librarians' responses on the issue. The problem with highest rank in Marketing DIRS is 3.95 which is inadequate fun and the least is 3.17 which is lack of marketing strategies

Research Question 2: What are the strategies for enhancing marketing of digital information resources and services in academic Libraries for sustainable reading habits in Gombe state?

Table 2: ***Mean and Standard Deviation of Library Staff on Strategies for Enhancing Marketing of Digital Information Resources and Services for Sustainable Reading Habits***
Keys: VA=Very Appropriate, **A=**Appropriate, **LA=**Less Appropriate, **NA=**Not Appropriate

s/n	Item Statement	FUK		GSU		FCET		Mean Sum		R	Dec
		X	±	X	±	X	±				
1	Organizing trainings, seminars and workshop to educate librarians on marketing of Digital Information Resources and services	3.95	.22	3.95	.22	3.35	.78	3.77	.53	1st	**VA**
2	Marketing Digital Information Resources and Services should be implemented in library school's curriculum.	3.95	.22	3.95	.22	3.29	.77	3.68	.57	2nd	**VA**

3	Library management should have a separate budget for marketing Digital Information Resources and Services	3.95	.21	3.95	.22	3.17	.88	3.54	.65	5th	**VA**
4	Management should have a Marketing digital Information Resources and Services policy.	3.90	.30	3.90	.30	3.17	.95	3.50	.68	6th	**VA**
5	Librarians should be willing to market Digital Information Resources and services	3.95	.21	3.95	.22	3.35	.86	3.57	.62	4th	**VA**
6	Unit should be established in Academic Libraries for marketing Digital Information Resources and services	4.00	.00	4.00	.00	3.29	.84	3.63	.61	3rd	**VA**
	Cluster Mean							**3.61**	**.61**		**VA**

FUK = Federal university Kashere, GSU = Gombe State university, FCET = Federal College of Education Technical, X = Mean; ± Standard Deviation; Mean Sum = Mean Summation; R = Rank; Dec = Decision; VA = Very Appropriate, A = Appropriate

Table 2 shows result of the strategies for enhancing marketing of digital information resources and services in academic libraries for sustainable reading habits in Gombe State. It reveals that all the identified strategies are rated very appropriate (3.77 - 3.50) such as organizing trainings, seminars and workshop to educate librarians on marketing of digital information resources and services, marketing digital information resources and services should be implemented in library school's curriculum, unit should be established in academic libraries for

marketing digital information resources and services, librarians should be willing to market digital information resources and services, library management should have a separate budget for marketing digital information resources and services, and management should have a marketing digital information resources and services policy. The cluster mean 3.61 ±61 shows that the identified strategies are highly appropriate for enhancing marketing of digital information resources and services for sustainable reading habits of the students. The standard deviation scores .68 - .53 shows low dispersion rate among the librarians' responses.

Discussion

The Discussion of the findings in this study was organized in line with the Research Questions that guided this study.

The findings of the study revealed the type digital information resources and services available in academic libraries in Gombe State, Nigeria. The result showed that 21 (46.6%) of the digital information resources such as electronic encyclopedia, electronic dictionaries, databases, electronic magazines, online public access catalogue, electronic books, electronic journals, and electronic project are available and in use. It shows that 13 (41.1%) of the digital information services such as internet services, current awareness service, **social** networking/media-based services, and video conferencing /web camera service are available and in use in academic libraries in Gombe State, Nigeria. While the DIRS that were not available in the institutions under study include Electronic document delivery, electronic interlibrary loan. As such lacking these resources and Services will affect the information service in the academic libraries and affect reading habits of undergraduates. To buttress the findings, Usman (2018) stated the followings as the types of DIRS usually found in academic libraries: online databases which are essential in contemporary research processes in university libraries. Some of these databases include: health network access

The Findings from this research indicated that several problems are associated with marketing digital information resources and services in academic libraries in Gombe State. However, the problem factors with highest mean ratings are inadequate fund, lack of effective communication between librarians and users, lack of digital marketing strategic skills among librarians and lack of facilities to market library services. This finding agrees with that of Abid (2000) who said that libraries in developing countries lack sufficient funds to subscribe to information resources. He opined that most libraries in developing nations remain libraries only in name and are unable to perform their vital role which is that of providing ready access to information and knowledge also Adebayo (2004) reported that the issue of funding is the worst problem facing libraries in Nigeria.

This is also in line with Ekpenyong (2003) and Igbokwe (2009) findings that inadequate infrastructure such as electricity, computers, internet facilities and photocopying services and the others have all contributed to mar the spirit of marketing library services in academic libraries

The findings of this research also indicated that all the items are rated as strategies for enhancing marketing DIRS in academic library. Such items are organizing trainings, seminars and workshop to educate librarians on marketing of digital information resources and services, marketing digital information resources and services should be implemented in library school's curriculum, library management should have a separate budget for marketing digital information resources and services, management should have a marketing digital information resources and services policy, librarians should be willing to market digital information resources and services, unit should be established in academic libraries for marketing digital information resources and services.

However, the item with the highest mean score is that training, seminars and workshop should be organized to educate librarians on marketing DIRS in academic libraries. Followed by librarians should be willing to market DIRS academic libraries and marketing should be implemented in library school's curriculum. Furthermore, librarians willing to market library services have been identified as a strategy in improving marketing library services. This item is in compliance with Gupta and Jambhekar (2002) who maintain that librarians should be very willing to market library services. This is because librarians are in an era where there are many information providers.

Conclusion

This study explored the marketing of DIRS in academic libraries in Gombe State, for sustainable reading habits in Gombe State. The investigation revealed some of the marketing strategies to be adopted for successful marketing of DIRS in academic libraries such as electronic advertisement, products and services rebranding, targeting and segmentation, online costumer/user relationship, marketing promotion (promo), online exhibition and display. The study further revealed some of the challenges that are associated with marketing DIRS such as: inadequate funding, lack of digital marketing strategic skills among librarians, Poor digital information facilities in the libraries, lack of digital marketing training, and lack of digital marketing policies in the libraries. As well as strategies for the enhancement of marketing DIRS in academic libraries.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made in accordance with the

findings of this study which include:

1. Adequate funds should be allocated for the development/provision of DIRS in academic libraries, particularly on the marketing of DIRS by the parent organization.
2. Proper organization of workshop, conferences and other training on marketing DIRS among academic library personals. Therefore, librarians should be train and re-retrain in the area of marketing DIRS skills to enable librarian to cope with the changing environment of users' needs.
3. The academic libraries especially the ones under study should employ the digital marketing experts and technologies in their libraries for proper handling of DIRS.
4. Marketing of DIRS should be implemented in library schools' curricular, so that the upcoming librarians would have background knowledge about marketing DIRS.
5. DIRS should be part of library orientation programs.

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