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Strategies in Promoting Library and Information Service in Contemporary Academic Library: Case Study of Kaduna State University

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Abstract

This paper considers the strategies in promoting library and information services in an academic library using Kaduna State University library as a case study. The major objectives of this study are to determine what promotion of library services is, the strategies used in the promotion, library and information services available in Kaduna State University which is our case study. Marketing cannot be left out while talking about promotion of library services because they go hand in hand. For library to remain relevant, libraries need to find ways to promote services and resources to clients as effectively as possible. To obtain relevant data and information for study five research questions was formulated based on the research objectives to guide this research work. A case study research design was used to survey Kaduna State University library. In the course of the research we were able to identify the promotional tools, the various services available in the library, the challenges encountered in the course of promoting library services and possible solutions to them. The survey method was used in the course of the research. A total of 60 (sixty) questionnaires we given out to respondent, a total of forty five (45) was retrieved.

Keyword: *Strategies, Library promotion, Marketing, Academic Library*

1.1 Introduction

As library continue to fight for their survival amid growing expectations, competitions from online sources and wavering public perceptions, effective marketing is increasingly becoming a critical tool to ensure the continued support of users, stakeholders and society as a whole. Promotion of library and information services is essentially the means or ways of informing

or persuading clientele on what you do and what you can do. This is important in Nigeria because it enlightens the patrons on the various services available in the library.

Information technology has created a new gateway for information services, information products and services in a multiplicity of formats that have made libraries and information centres more competitive and alert. Libraries are being

subjected to significant pressures from the information revolution. The challenges of budget cuts, increased user base, rapid growth of material, rising costs, networking demands, competition by database vendors, and complexity in information requirement are forcing the professionals to adopt marketing to improve the management of library and information centers.

Information technologies is changing rapidly, information products and services are in a multiplicity of formats in libraries. For librarians, libraries and information services to stay viable in the current climate, it is important that they adopt marketing strategies to help meet organizational missions, goals and objectives. According to Enache (2008) marketing has long been associated with the selling of a product in order to make profit, but was extended to the non-profit sector including libraries. For libraries, marketing is about a set activity including understanding clients' needs, determining market niches, identifying products and services building client relationships and creating marketing mix.

A managerial tool assisting libraries to face challenges now and in the future is effective for promotion and marketing. For library to remain relevant libraries need to find ways to promote services and resources to clients as effectively as possible. As such, promotional approaches are used to convey the availability and value of service and resources to target audience and are been designed to cause library users and non-library users to act. However for the higher institutions' educational objectives to be achieved through the library, the library resources and services must be made readily available to the students and lecturers on request.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the strategies in promoting library

and information services in contemporary academic library. Other specific objectives are:

To identify promotional tools and techniques used in promoting library and information services.

To identify ways/strategies of promoting library and information services.

To identify the various information services available in the library.

To determine the constraints of effective promotion of library and information services

To suggest practical solution on how to promote library and information services.

1.3 Research Questions

What are the various tools and techniques used in promoting library and information services?

What are the ways /strategies of promoting library and information services?

Identify the information services available in the library?

What are the constraints encountered in the cause of promoting library and information services?

In what ways can library and information services be promoted?

2.1 Review of Related Literature

Promotion, in a library setting, according to Seddon (1990), can be referred to the methods used to provide information to users about library services and resources, ensuring that users are aware of the services and resources available. It includes print and online advertising. A variety of techniques has been used to promote library services and resources. Nkanga (2002) found that promotional strategies such as personal

contacts, circulars, memos, telephone calls, meetings, direct mailing, and displays talks newsletters library tours were widely used. Promotion in a library setting can therefore refer to the methods used to provide information to users about the library's services and resources, ensuring that users are aware of the services and resources available. These methods include approaches such as print and online advertising. Jackson (2001) considered how to promote the interfaces, how to choose the right time to promote the services and found that a variety of promotional methods such as business cards, leaflets, e-mails, letters, newsletters, interactive presentations were used to attract users.

Similarly, Adeloje (2003) also presented a number of practical ideas such as the use of promotional techniques including brochures, library guide and exhibitions. The internet was used to promote library services with the help of techniques such as live digital reference desk, cross search and library portals. To keep pace with evolving information technologies librarians use a group of software applications including blogs, wikis and podcasting, media-sharing tools such as YouTube and Flickr and other social media networking services to market their services and resources with mixed success. These techniques continued to be used, and in addition the literature reports on various approaches taken to promoting library services and resources with mixed results on effectiveness. Adeyoyin (2005) citing Germano (2010) believe that comprehensive marketing campaigns are required, used in conjunction with promotional materials.

According to Empey and Black (2005) they used anecdotal evidence to assess positive changes in user attitudes. The perception is that these small changes made significant improvements in staff and user engagement as well as increased user statistics. The tools for promotion were

reviewed and the promotion activities of the studied department's information products were described by Cummings (1994). Viewing from another perspective, Igbeka (2008) Marketing is the spreading of information on the potential usefulness of new products/tools. It is also about keeping users informed about library activities and involving them in collection development. It is important for information professionals to be able to find, organize, analyze and package information in a way that makes it meaningful and relevant to a user

There are various ways of promoting library services and resources, aggressive advertising, programs on print and electronic media, user education through speaking engagements, handbills, billboards, presentations to various business groups and civic organizations. Others include identification of potential client's needs, workshops and promotional opportunities with local business chambers to attract new businesses, writing articles about fee-based services and forming an advisory board of major clients to solicit feedback. Rowley (2001) calls marketing, the management process which identifies, anticipates and supplies customer requirements efficiently and profitably.

Information is an indispensable factor for promoting the development of society. The present age is rightly characterized as the age of information, where its success in any activity is based on the amount and accuracy of information available. Library and other non-profit organizations have only recently become aware of the need to market their products and services.

2.2 Library and Information Services Available in Kaduna State University.

Kaduna State University library was established to provide information resources and services in order to support the purpose of the university. Its services include information services

provided by the library as a way a drawing the user attention to information processed in the library by meeting the demand of the user. There are different sections in the library with their various unique functions that help meet users need.

- The circulation section.
- Reference section.
- Serials section.
- ICT division.
- Collection development.

2.3 Types of Resource Available in the Library

Print resources: they are books, journals, newspapers, magazines and pamphlets, bounded copies of e-journals, government proceedings and document on Africa and America.

Non-Print Resources: they are resources also known as electronic resources. These are soft copies of information that can only be viewed through the use of compactible hardware or application of information and communication technology. Examples include CD-ROMs, microforms, internet and other storage device.

Reference Resources: these are type of resources that offers information on research and provide facts about the documents. They also provide easy access and retrieval of information.

2.4 Promotional Tools for Marketing

There are various ways of promoting library and information service in Academic library, and lots of benefits are attached to it. It Increases patronage, effective utilization of library resources, increased value in the organization, education of clientele and changed perceptions. Promotional tools that can be used by academic libraries to promote their services and resources include: Digital

media blogs and podcasts, events such as orientation tours and workshops (Warbeck Alman, 2007). A good website helps to bring services and resources together in a unique way, because it is a direct link between the library and its specific users. it also provides a channel for communication with target user. Some media can be cross functional; for example, traditional tools such as flyers, posters can also be used to promote events and programs.

Many forms of techniques such as a combination of outreach programs, holding lectures, changing library exhibits, library tours, classroom instruction, one-on-one appointments, library homepage, online catalogue and one-on-one training were suggested to promote library services and resources (Dordsworth 1998). Various strategies of promoting library services include the following.

Publicity: Wide publicity is given to all programs been conducted by the library. For example banners, university portals are also used to disseminate information relating to various programs and also the activities going on in the Library.

Library Orientation: It is important for every institution of higher learning to organize orientation program me for fresh students jointly or in departmental bases .Most university organizes it jointly and it been organized by the students affairs. The library aspects of the Orientation is been handled by the university Library in other to familiarize the students with the various department of the library and also the various services been provided by the library.

Display and exhibitions: library and information services can be promoted by various means, display and exhibition. According to Davison display and exhibition can boost current awareness in the library because it allows clientele to

know the existence of materials in the Library.

Advertisement: another strategy of promoting library and information services is by advertisement.

User Education: the aim of user education is to enable the students use the library effectively with minimum problem for the purpose of learning research and recreation.

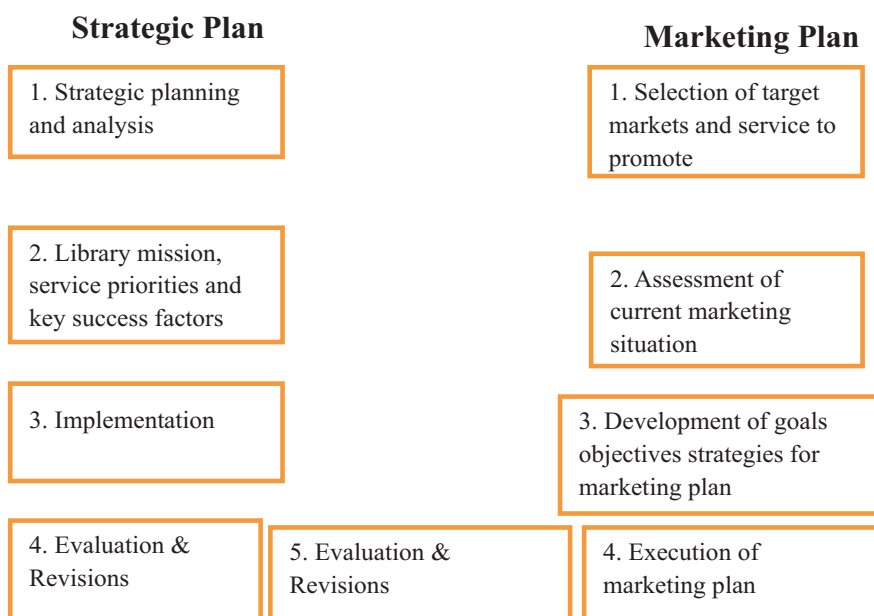
Environment: the environment of reading should be conducive because it makes learning effective and interesting. The decoration of the Library environment should be captivating in order to attract readers to the Library.

Furthermore, Sharma and Bharwaj (2009) suggest some strategies for marketing

Library & Information Services such as: creating a library web page for users, emailing, making use of the library wall space, etc. In the same vein, Gordons (2011) also identified some of the marketing strategies as advertisement, website, printing flyers, newsletter and emailing.

2.5 Using Strategic Planning for Marketing

Academic libraries knowingly or unknowingly use their strategic plans to launch marketing activities. Some library calls it outreach (reaching out to library patrons). It's called selecting and analyzing target markets. Marketing and strategic planning are interrelated we will see from the diagram below.



3.1 Research Methodology

A case study research design was used to survey Kaduna State University library. The A questionnaire based survey research was employed for the study. According Cohen and Morrison (2012) questionnaire is widely used and it is a useful instrument for collecting survey information without the presence of

the researcher. Pie chart, bar chart and frequency table was used in analyzing the questionnaire.

The target population of this study comprises staff of Kaduna state university library. A total of sixty (60) questionnaires were administered and forty five (45) was returned.

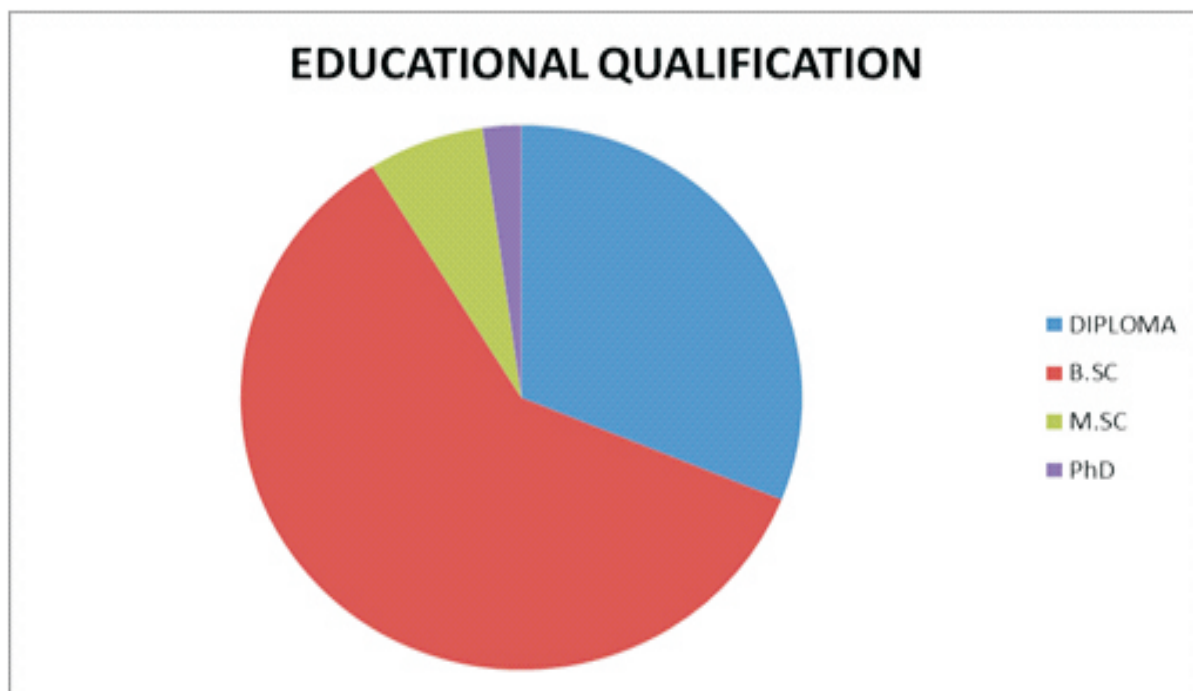


Figure 1: Distribution of Respondent by Educational qualification

Figure 1 shows that 112(31%) are diploma holders, 216(60%) have Bachelor in library and information science (B.SC), The Master's degree (M.SC) holders are 24(7%) while 8(2%) represent those with PhD from the above analysis we can see that the B.SC holder makes up the majority of our respondents which has the highest percentage of 60%.

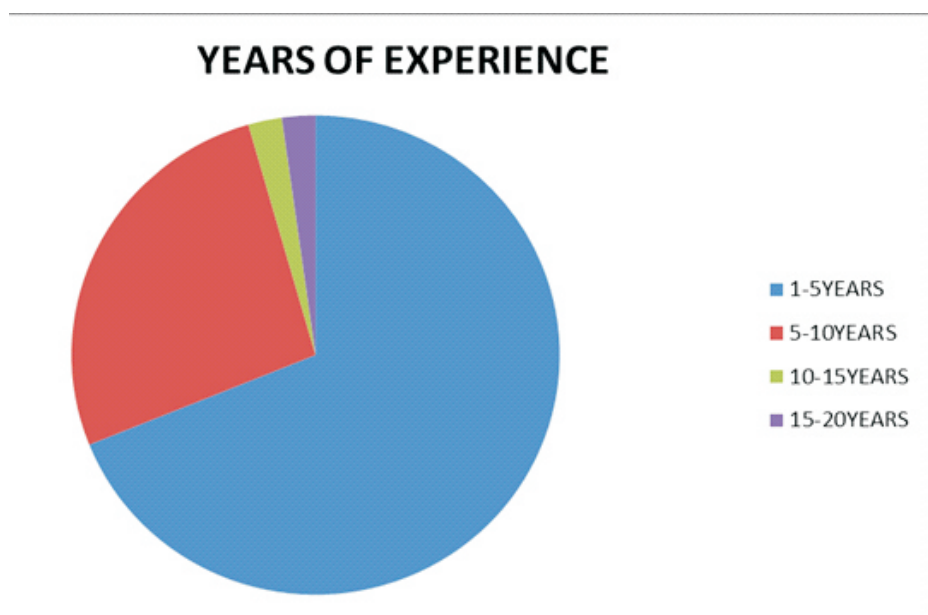


Figure 2: Distribution of Respondents by years of experience

Figure 2 indicates that 248(69%) of the respondents have a working experience of (1-5yrs), which shows that majority of them have worked between 1 and 5 years, the chart shows that 96(27%) of the staff have worked for (5 – 10 years), while 8(2%) shows that both (10-15years) and (15-20years) have the same no of respondents. We can depict from our analysis above the majority of our respondent falls between 1-5 years of experience (69%).

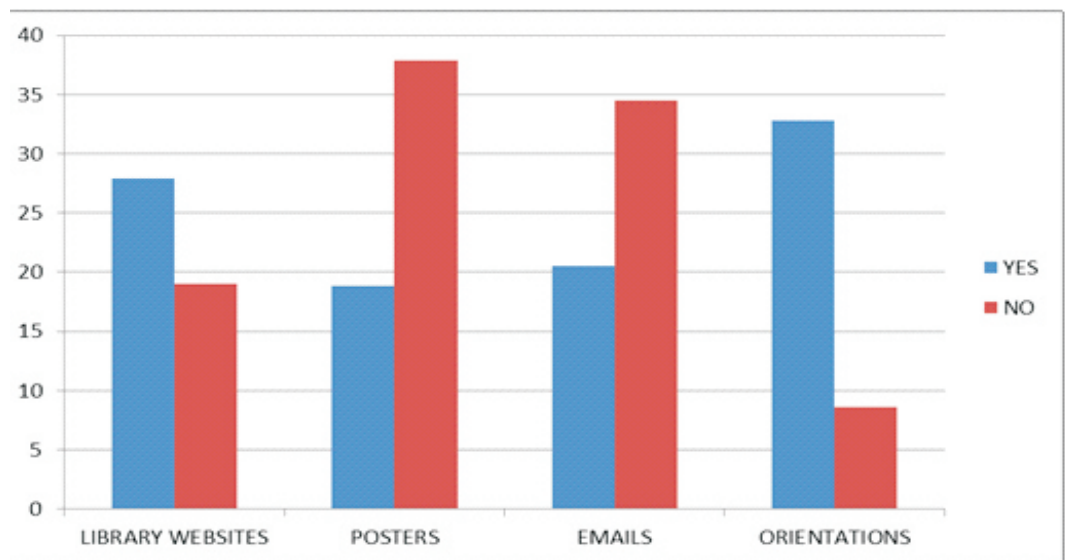


Figure 3: Represents Promotion Tools used in the Library

From the above figure, 27.9% of respondents said Yes to Library website while 19% said No. Then 18.8% of the respondents said Yes to posters while 37.9% said No. 20.5% said Yes to Emails while 34.5% said No. to concerning orientation and tours 32.8 % said Yes while 8.6 % said No. Our analysis has shown that majority of our respondent sees orientation and library tour has the best promotional tool, with percentage respondents of 32.8%.

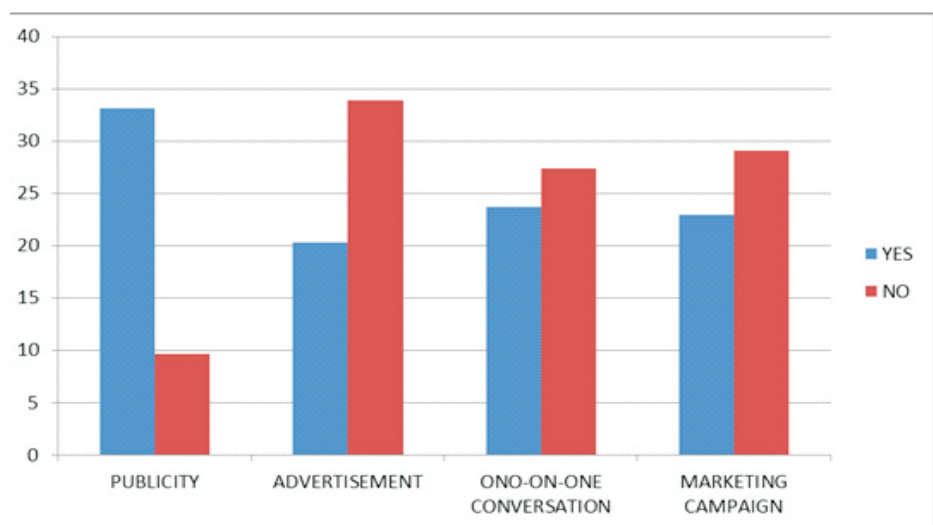


Figure 4: Represent ways of promoting library and information service in the Library

Figure 4 above represents ways of promoting library and information services. It shows that 33.1% of the respondents indicate Yes to publicity while (9.7%) said No. Then 20.3% said Yes to advertisement while 33.9% said No. Then, 23.7% said Yes to one-on-one conversation, while 27.4% said No 22.9% indicated marketing campaign while 29.1% said No. From the above table we can say that our respondents see publicity as the best way of promoting library and information services as 33.1% of the respondents indicated on the affirmative.

Table 1: Represents Information services available in the library

S/N	Services Available in the Library	No. of Respondent	Number of Respondents with 'No'
1	Circulation Services	35(17.9%)	10(34.5%)
2	Reference services	41(20.9%)	4(13.8%)
3	Serials services	42(21.4%)	3(10.3%)
4	Electronic library services	39(19.9%)	6(20.7%)
5	Collection development	39(19.9%)	6(20.7%)

The table above represents the information services available in the library, 35(17.9%) indicated Yes to Circulation services while 10(34.5%) said No. Then 41(20.9%) of the respondent said Yes to Reference services while 4(13.8%) said No. 42(21%) of the respondent said Yes to Serials services while 3(10.3%) said No. Finally, 39 (19.9%) of the respondents said Yes to both Electronic Library services and Collection development while 6(20.7%) said No.

Table 2: Represent Challenges Encountered in Library Promoting Library Services

S/N	Challenges Encountered in Library Service Promotion	No of Respondent with 'Yes'	No of Respondent with 'NO'
1	Insufficient fund	36(23.8%)	9(12.1%)
2	Lack of staff training	34(22.5%)	11(14.9%)
3	Low staff strength	24(15.9%)	21(28.4%)
4	Limited library resources	33(21.9%)	12(16.2%)
	Lack of conducive environment	24(15.9%)	21(28.4%)

From the above table, 36(23.8%) of the respondent said Yes to insufficient fund, while 9(12.1%) said No. Then 34(22.5%) of the respondent indicate Yes while 11(14.9%) indicates no. 24(15.9%) of the respondent indicated yes to both low staff strength and lack of conducive environment, while 21(28.4%) said No to both, 33(21.9%) of the respondent said Yes to limited library resources while 12(16.2%) said No. From the above table majority of the respondent choose insufficient fund 36(23.8%) as a major challenge.

Table 3: Represents Solutions on how to promote Library and Information Services

S/N	Suggested Solution to Improve Library Services	No of Respondent with Yes	No of Respondent with 'No'
1	Increment in allocation of fund to the library	38(21.8%)	7(13.7%)
2	Staff training	34(19.5%)	11(21.6%)
3	Conducive reading environment	32(18.4%)	13(25.5%)
4	Increase in library collection	37(21.3%)	8(15.7%)
5	Employment of more staff in the library.	33(19%)	12(23.5%)

The table above shows that 38(21.8%) of the respondent said Yes to increment in fund allocated to the library, while 7(13.7%) said No, 34(19.5%) said Yes to staff training and 11(21.6%) said No. 32(18.4%) indicated Yes to Conducive reading environment while 13(25.5%) said No, 37(21.3%) indicated Yes to increase in library collection while 8(15.7%) said No, 33(19%) said Yes to employment of more staff in the library while 12(23.5%) said No. from the above table majority indicated increment in allocation to the library as the best solution. 38(21.8%).

Conclusion and Recommendation

Given the findings in this study, some pertinent conclusions were drawn, firstly B. Sc holders categorizes the highest no of staff in Kaduna State University Library with working experience of 1-5years. Orientation and Library tours is seen as the best tool to promote library and information resources in Kaduna state University library, from the finding we can see that websites is seen as the best way of promoting library services. Some major challenges were also identified in the course of the research, such as insufficient fund, lack of staff training, low staff strength, limited library resources, lack of conducive reading environment.

Promotion of library and information services in contemporary Academic library cannot be overemphasized; if the major challenges are not properly looked into it can affect the effective running of an academic library. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

Increment in allocation of fund to the library; there should be increase in fund been allocated to the library for efficient and effective running of the library.

Staff training, staff training is very important before a library can meet up with the patrons need, the staff need to be trained because they can't give what they don't have.

The library environment should be conducive for users at any point in time

The resources available in the library should be increased, relevant once should be added and those that the student require. Library is a growing organism so our collection should increase from time to time.

Employment of more staff to promote library services.

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