



INFLUENCE OF MARKETING AND INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCIES ON USE OF INFORMATION RESOURCES IN SELECTED ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of marketing strategies and ICT competencies on the utilization of information resources in academic libraries. A survey research method was employed, using questionnaires to collect data from 220 librarians across five academic libraries in Kaduna State. Total enumeration research design method was used because the population size was manageable, and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings underscore the necessity for consistent marketing efforts by academic libraries to enhance user awareness of information resources. Additionally, the study identifies proficiency in basic ICT skills, such as Microsoft Word, Excel, downloading, uploading, scanning, and software installation, as crucial competencies for librarians. The major challenges in marketing information resources include irregular training and development of library staff and inadequate communication between librarians and users. The study concluded that there is an urgent need for effective marketing of information resources to increase their usage. It recommended that academic library management should consistently promote awareness, encourage the use of available resources, and ensure their sustainability. Moreover, it suggests conducting annual or bi-annual needs assessments to maintain continuous marketing efforts for information resources

Keywords: Academic libraries, ICT competencies, Information resources Marketing, Use

Introduction

The use of a product or service is important because it allows individuals to meet with needs, enhance their livelihood from the benefits the product offers. According to Ani (2022) utilisation of library resources refers to the reported use of information sources in the library by users (which could be students, lecturers, or researchers, etc). Utilization of library resources simply means using library resources. Odunola and Tella (2019) defined library use/patronage as the consultation or use of library information resources by users of the library, either in physical or remote access. Adegoke

(2015) defined academic libraries as libraries attached to higher institutions of learning above the secondary school level, which are responsible for providing information resources and services to support teaching, learning and research needs of students, staff and other clients of their institutions.

Therefore, the importance of regularly informing and educating staff, students and the entire community about the availability, accessibility of current and relevant materials and the benefits of enhancing their capacity



building in their various careers cannot be overemphasised. The rate at which the information required by patrons is satisfied depends largely on the availability, currency, accessibility, variety of media by which the information resources are documented, disseminated and utilised. There is no doubt that if the users are satisfied with their information needs in the library, such patrons will always see the library as the solution to their information needs and will always inform others with related information needs, thereby increasing the level of academic library usage.

Information resources are those materials in academia that contain organised knowledge for teaching and learning purposes. Odu (2017) viewed information resources as information materials found in the library which include books, journals, newspapers, magazines, theses, reports, and government publications among others. These resources manifest either in print or in electronic format. They are the essential ingredients that academic libraries acquire to function effectively to meet the information needs of library users towards achieving the goal of the institution. It is therefore imperative to implore every aspect of marketing and ICTs competencies to showcase and make users aware of the information resources available in the library for optimum use. The use of conventional and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) tools for marketing information resources in academic libraries will assist immensely in enlightening and informing users of the available resources and services in the library and encourage their usage for increased patronage.

American Association of Marketing (2017) viewed marketing as the activity, set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offers that have value for consumers, partners and society in general. Libraries need to market their resources and services so as to

achieve customers' satisfaction, promote the image of the library and compete for customers, resources and services. Marketing and ICT competence can bring about improvement in organisational status and enhance the image of librarians, thereby improving library performance. However, Odunola and Tella (2019) observed that libraries are regarded as reading centres in which users do less of in-depth consultation of the resources. This decline in library patronage could mean that library resources and services are not being fully used by the students, which if left unattended to will undermine the purpose of establishing academic libraries. Based on this, the importance of paying attention to users of academic libraries with regards to ensuring that the information resources and services get to them and are patronised on a regular basis cannot be over-emphasised as they are the reason for the establishment of academic libraries. Therefore, librarians as information professionals need adequate knowledge, skills and attributes of marketing principles and a certain level of ICT competencies to make users know the available information resources and the benefit of their use to enhance their academic activities, thereby increasing use of information resources.

Librarians require adequate ICT competence to harness diverse information resources which are in digital format. Librarians require ICT competence to be efficient and effective in applying ICTs in information service delivery. The emerging technologies in library such as cloud computing, crowdsourcing, metadata, integrated library management systems, institutional repositories etc have changed the way academic libraries provide services for optimum use. (Omehia, Okwu and Nsirim, 2021). ICT competencies of librarians are those technological or computer skills and knowledge required by librarians to fully exploit information services in the wake of new technology. Oyedokun, Oyewumi,



Akanbi and Laaro (2018) viewed ICT competencies of library staff to be those relevant skills and knowledge to be acquired by those working in the library to fully exploit information search, retrieval, and delivery using electronic format. It is the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and abilities at a significance level of expertise that enable one to perform appropriately and professionally in a given task in a work place. Therefore, academic librarians in Kaduna state are expected to have a significant level of competence in the use of ICT technologies to effectively acquire, evaluate, criticise, process, preserve, disseminate, and communicate information in the 21st century for optimum utilisation of information resources in academic libraries.

The government of Nigeria is investing billions of naira on the acquisition of books, journals, online database subscriptions, e-journals and e-books to support the collection of academic libraries. If the libraries are not patronised and these resources are not used by users, the investment by the government is considered a waste. Therefore, the adoption of good marketing strategies and required ICT competencies in academic libraries, where users will be more aware, better informed about the potential benefits of use of the resources and services available in the academic library for the enhancement of their academic activities and the eventual realisation of the institutional goal is the crux of this research work.

Statement of the Research Problem

Academic libraries spend huge amount of money to acquire relevant and up-to-date information resources, process, preserve, organise, disseminate them to facilitate learning, teaching and research activities on academic environments. Mohammed (2017) posits that the university spends the ever-decreasing budget to subscribe to databases

and purchase both print and electronic resources but user patronage has continued to decrease.

In spite of the huge amount of financial resources being utilised in acquiring these resources and services, the researcher, observed that most of these vital resources acquired are not properly utilised, which could be due to irregular/inadequate awareness. The researcher also observed that, today the rate of patronage is decreasing on a daily basis which is not a good signal to academic libraries, hence the need to revive and sustain the profession for posterity, as library is user centered. Before now, the library staff on resuming duty spends not less than two hours shelving the consulted resources, the reference librarian used to be busy all through, attending to users but reverse is the case today, as most of the chairs usually filled up by users are now dusty and very few of these vital information resources are consulted due to decreasing rate of patronage by the target users. This is corroborated by Olorunfemi and Ipadeola (2021) that most undergraduates completed their education without visiting the library or using the library information resources that could possibly contribute positively to their academic activities, thereby making the number of students using libraries to be very small as against the number of students in the institutions. This could be as result of lack of users' unawareness of the availability of these information resources. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to investigate the influence of marketing and ICT competencies on use of information resources in selected academic libraries in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

This study examined the influence of marketing and ICT competencies on use of information resources in selected academic



libraries in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. identify need for marketing information resources in some selected academic libraries in Kaduna State;
2. know the ICT competencies required of librarians in marketing information resources and services in some selected academic libraries in Kaduna and
3. find out the problems militating against marketing library resources in some selected academic libraries in Kaduna.

Literature Review

Information Resources

Financial, human, material, information resources etc are vital tools that should be available to accomplish a given task. For this study, information resources are the focal point of accomplishing the goal of academic libraries as information provider. Odu (2017) viewed information resources as information materials found in the library which include books, journals, newspapers, magazines, theses, reports, and government publications among others. These resources manifest either in print or in electronic format. They are the essential ingredients that academic libraries acquire to function effectively to meet the information needs of library users towards achieving the goal of the institution. Academic libraries and professional librarians significantly contribute to cultivating effective study habits among students through extensive collections, literacy promotion, and support for educational initiatives (Adkins & Brendler, 2015). In other words, students' academic activities depend on the information resources in their parent institutions as they help them acquire knowledge for their academic pursuits and this is possible by exhaustive utilisation of information resources and services in the library.

Utilisation of Information Resources and Services in Academic libraries

It is important that information acquired in the libraries are effectively utilised, this is the main reason for spending huge amount of money on a regular basis in order to support the parents institutions towards achieving their set objective. Alegbeleye, Madukoma and Dahunsi (2020) opined that academic libraries build collections to enhance teaching, learning and research activities in tertiary institutions with the expectation that students and staff will visit the library and make effective use of the information resources to satisfy their information needs. The main motivation that drives academic libraries to a great length in providing all manner of relevant information resources is to ensure that the information needs of all categories of users are met and to stimulate the use of the library (Usuka, Nwachukwu and Nwachukwu, 2019). However, Osinulu (2020) observed that students are either not aware and or not making optimum use of these vital resources. The researcher noted that, of what benefits are resources when they are not utilised for the purpose for which they are acquired. Observing the fact that the use of resources is part of assessment performance in academic libraries, librarians should be greatly concerned with the use of library information resources and services as they ensure creating awareness through the various channels of marketing techniques.

ICT competence for academic librarians

Information Communication Technology (ICT) use is changing and this will have an impact on both users and libraries. Because of users' information needs, librarians will have to work harder to assure consistency and conformance. Information needs are expected to rise in the future due to the inevitable changes that will occur. This necessitates a quick development of ICT training based on the increasingly necessary library competences. ICT proficiency is a requirement for librarians in the rapidly evolving field of



technology. Oyedokun et al. (2018) viewed the ICT competencies of library staff to be relevant skills and knowledge to be acquired by those working in the library to be able to fully exploit information search, retrieval, and delivery by using an electronic format. It is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities at a level of expertise sufficient to be able to perform appropriately and professionally a given task in a workplace. ICT competence required by librarians, as outlined by Doyle (2019), includes online collaboration, e-mail management competency, online research skills, desktop publishing, word processing skills, social media management, data management, and retrieval skills.

Librarians require extensive ICT competences in academic libraries to enable them perform better in providing information services. Raju (2017) discussed IT knowledge and skills needed by academic librarians in the digital library environment. The results of his study revealed that 70 to 75% of job advertisements in the academic library sector emphasised advanced IT skills (integrated library system, advanced computer skills, digitisation process, web design and development, IR and technical skills, which are repositories, digitisation and curation of research data and other digital content).

The survival of a library depends significantly on its image in the minds of patrons and its

parent institution, which can be achieved through a strategic marketing approach and the ICT knowledge possessed by librarians (Osinulu, 2020). If service provision meets patrons' needs, users will be more encouraged to utilize these services to satisfy their information needs at any given time (Onifade et al., 2013). Effective ICT competencies allow librarians to support the academic and research activities of their users, thus reinforcing the library's role as an essential component of the educational institution (Usuka, Nwachukwu, & Nwachukwu, 2019).

Research Methodology

The study employed descriptive research design. The study adopted survey for collection of data. Nworgu (2015) views that descriptive survey research is concerned with systematic description of events as they are, because it is aimed at collecting data on something and describing the characteristics and facts about the population of a given study. Total enumeration method was used to cover all the 220 respondents because the population was manageable. 220 copies of the questionnaire were administered, 186 were returned, found usable and analysed using descriptive statistics (percentage, mean and standard deviation).



Table 1: Need for Marketing Information Resources and Services

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	STD	Decision
1.	To enlighten users and create awareness on the resources and services available in the library	133 (72%)	48 (26%)	5 (3%)	-	3.69	0.52	Strongly agreed
2.	To know the information need of users and attain high level of customers' satisfaction	104 (55%)	76 (40.9)	4 (2.2)	2 (1.1)	3.52	0.60	Strongly agreed
3.	To foster a good interpersonal relationship between librarians and the categories of users in the community	81(43.5)	97 (52%)	8 (4%)	-	3.39	0.57	Agreed
4.	To encourage effective use of relevant and current information resources and services in the library	126 (67)	55 (20%)	5 (3%)	-	3.65	0.53	Strongly agreed
5.	To improve the level of information literacy among users	95 (51%)	77 (41%)	10 (5%)	4 (2%)	3.41	0.69	Agreed
6.	To be objective in providing information services	63 (34%)	108 (58%)	15 (8%)	-	3.26	0.60	Agreed
7.	To survive in the competitive information environment	83 (44%)	91 (50%)	12 (7%)	-	3.38	0.61	Agreed
Mean Cluster						3.47	0.59	

Keys: SA = Strongly agreed, A = Agreed, D = Disagreed, SD = Strongly Disagreed, X = mean, SD= standard deviation.



Table 4.4: sought to know the need for marketing information resources in use. It shows that enlightening users and creating awareness on the information resources and services available in the library (3.69), encourage effective use of relevant and current information resources and services in the library (3.65), know the information need of users and attain high level of customers' satisfaction (03.52) the respondents strongly agreed. They also agreed to the following

questions: to improve the level of information literacy among users (3.4), to foster a good interpersonal relationship between librarians and the categories of users in the community (3.39), to survive in the competitive information environment (3.38) and to be objective in providing information services (3.26). The **cluster means** of 3.47 shows that needs for marketing information resources and services in academic libraries were agreed to by all respondents in academic libraries.

Table 4.6: ICT Competencies for Librarians on Use of Information Resources

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std	Decision
1.	Proficiency in basic ICT skills eg MS word, Excel, downloading, uploading, scanning, software installation etc	144 (77%)	41 (22%)	1 (0.5%)	-	3.77	0.44	Strongly Agreed
2.	Ability to troubleshoot the various ICT technology tools in the library	88 (47%)	81(44%)	15 (8%)	2(1%)	3.39	0.64	Agreed
3.	Knowledge of various databases to obtain authenticated information resources online	91(48%)	86 (46%)	7 (4%)	2 (1%)	3.43	0.62	Agreed
4.	Ability to evaluate library and information service delivery	89 (48%)	91 (49%)	5 (3%)	1 (0.5%)	3.44	0.58	Agreed
5.	Keeping informed with the recent ICT development and adoption in the academic library environment	89 (48%)	90 (48%)	7 (4%)	-	3.44	0.57	Agreed
6.	Knowledge of various library application software, adoption and use in academic libraries	85 (46%)	92 (49%)	4(2. %)	5 (3%)	3.43	0.66	Agreed



7.	Information retrieval skills; for downloading relevant information resources eg e-books, e-journals	79 (42%)	96 (52%)	9 (5%)	2 (1.1)	3.35	0.63	Agreed
8.	Proficiency in the use of social media networking tools eg facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter etc for showcasing information resources	70 (38%)	99 (54%)	14 (8%)	3 (2%)	3.27	0.67	Agreed
9.	Knowledge of networking/Database management to manage and secure e-resources in the library	86 (46%)	94 (51%)	3 (2%)	3(2%)	3.41	0.61	Agreed
10.	Regular training/development of librarians in ICT core courses	96 (52%)	83 (45%)	5(3%)	2 (1%)	3.47	0.61	Agreed
11.	Marketing research skills	62 (33%)	107 (58%)	16 (9%)	1 (0.5%)	3.24	0.62	Agreed
12.	Digitisation of rare library materials	70 (38%)	101 (54%)	14 (8%)	1 (0.5%)	3.30	0.60	Agreed
Mean Cluster						3.41	0.60	

Keys: SA = Strongly agreed, A = Agreed, D = Disagreed, SD = Strongly Disagreed, X = mean, SD= standard deviation



Research question 4 requested the opinion of respondents on ICT competencies required by librarians for effective information service delivery in academic libraries. The table indicates that only the item; Proficiency in basic ICT skills eg MS word, Excel, downloading, uploading, scanning, software installation etc with mean value of 3.77 had strongly agreed option. Regular training/development of librarians in ICT core courses, ability to evaluate library and information service delivery, ability to troubleshoot the various ICT technology tools in the library, keeping informed with the recent ICT development and adoption in the academic library environment, knowledge of various databases to obtain authenticated information resources online, information

retrieval skills; for downloading relevant information resources eg e-books, e-journals, keeping informed with the recent ICT development and adoption in the academic library environment, knowledge of various library application software, adoption and use in academic libraries, Proficiency in the use of social media networking tools eg Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter etc for showcasing information resources, digitisation of rare library materials, marketing research skills with mean value ranging from 2.5-3.49 all had agreed. The **cluster means** of 3.41 indicates that respondents agreed that all the above-mentioned competencies are required by librarians for effective information services delivery.

Table 4.8: Problems Associated with Marketing of Information Resources in Academic Libraries

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std	Decision
1.	Inadequate effective communication between librarians and users	83 (45%)	77 (41%)	21 (11%)	4 (2%)	3.29	0.75	Agreed
2.	Lack of marketing policy document for promoting information resources in academic libraries	70 (38%)	99 (53%)	16 (9%)	1 (0.5%)	3.28	0.64	Agreed
3.	Inadequate marketing research skills by librarians	69 (37%)	92 (50%)	25 (13%)	-	3.24	0.67	Agreed
4.	Insufficient high-tech facilities for marketing in academic libraries	50 (27%)	117 (63%)	19 (10%)	-	3.17	0.59	Agreed
5.	Inadequate funding for ICT infrastructure in libraries	54 (29%)	120 (65%)	12 (7%)	-	3.23	0.55	Agreed
6.	Irregular training/development of library staff on marketing	69 (37%)	106 (57%)	11 (6%)	-	3.31	0.58	Agreed



competence and ICT development

7.	Inadequate technical know-how by librarians	58 (31%)	90 (48%)	28 (15%)	10 (5%)	3.05	0.82	Agreed
8.	Erratic power supply	57 (31%)	112 (60%)	12 (67%)	5 (3%)	3.19	0.67	Agreed
9.	Poor internet connectivity	61 (33%)	107 (58%)	15 (8%)	3 (2%)	3.22	0.66	Agreed
10.	Willingness on the part of some librarians as some still believe that marketing is for profit making organizations	62 (33%)	72 (39%)	46 (25%)	6 (3%)	3.03	0.83	Agreed
Mean Cluster						3.20	0.68	

Keys: SA = Strongly agreed, A = Agreed, D = Disagreed, SD = Strongly Disagreed, X = mean, SD= standard deviation

In answering this question, a list of factors affecting effective and efficient marketing of information resources in academic libraries were presented to the respondents to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement. The table shows that the respondents agreed with: irregular training/development of library staff on marketing; inadequate effective communication between librarians and users; lack of marketing policy document for promoting information resources in academic libraries; inadequate marketing research skills by librarians; inadequate funding for ICT infrastructure in libraries; poor internet connectivity; inadequate technical know-how by librarians; erratic power supply, insufficient high-tech facilities for marketing in academic libraries and irregular training/development of library staff on marketing with the mean values between 2.5-3.49. The **cluster means** of 3.20 shows that all the respondents agreed with the above factors as some of the problems hindering effective marketing of information resources in academic libraries.

Summary of Findings

1. The need for marketing information resources are; to enlighten users and create awareness on the information resources and services available in academic library, to encourage effective use of relevant, current information resources and services in the library, to know the information need of users and attain high level of customers' satisfaction in academic libraries.
2. The ICT competencies required by academic librarians are; basic ICT skills eg MS word, Excel, downloading, uploading, scanning, software installation, keeping informed with the recent ICT development and adoption in the academic library environment, knowledge of various library application software, adoption and usage in academic libraries among other.



3. Irregular training/development of library staff on marketing competence and ICT development, inadequate effective communication between librarians and users, lack of written marketing policy document for promoting information resources in academic libraries among others were the major problems on the use of information resources in academic libraries in Kaduna State.

Conclusion

The study underscored the critical role of marketing strategies and ICT competencies in enhancing the utilization of information resources in academic libraries. Effective marketing campaigns and robust ICT training are essential to increase user awareness and engagement with library resources. Implementing targeted awareness initiatives and continuous professional development for librarians can address key challenges such as inadequate communication and irregular training. Future research could focus on evaluating the effectiveness of specific marketing strategies and ICT training programs, as well as exploring user perspectives to refine these approaches. By bridging gaps identified in previous studies and integrating actionable recommendations, this research contributes to advancing best practices in academic libraries and supporting their role in academic achievement.

Recommendations

With reference to the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Academic libraries management should constantly ensure creation of awareness, encourage the use of available information resources and ensure their sustainability so that users can be aware of them for optimum

library use. The management should conduct need assessment programme either or annually bi-annually to ensure marketing of information resources is sustained.

2. Academic library management should ensure that librarians acquire the basic / high level ICT competencies required for effective and efficient marketing of information resources, providing effective and information services delivery for optimum use information resources in the library. Librarians should be updated with the recent ICT developments, regular training on ICT programmes, training on how to evaluate information, so that the information need of users are being satisfied in the library or at their own pace without necessarily coming to the library with minimum time and effort.
3. Adequate funding to acquire print materials and ICT tools needed for marketing information resources and services. A written marketing policy document for promoting information resources in academic libraries should be provided to guide and to sustain marketing of information resources. Increase Internet bandwidth, provide alternative power supply to ensure constant use of the ICT facilities in the library so as not to discourage users from using the library when there is power outage.



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