

## **Promotion of Information Services and Resources in University Libraries**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research aimed to identify how libraries promote their services and resources for awareness creation among library patrons and the role of the library staff in creating this awareness among users about information services and resources. The study was undertaken through a questionnaire-based survey. Data collection procedure were completed in two phases. In the first round, the data were collected from 13 in-charge librarians/ marketing officers and in the second round, data were collected from 243 library users. Data were analyzed using SPSS. Results demonstrate that planning and implementing promotional activities provides a chance to evaluate the utilization of information resources and services. Promotional activities not only create awareness but also justify the budget spent on the acquisition of information resources.

**Keywords:** Information services, Information resources, Promotional Activities, University Libraries.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Despite the fact that marketing of information resources and services of libraries and information centers is generally new. In this context, practices of marketing and promotion are

taken for the enhancement of library' information resources and the current services. Similarly, fast emanant areas of the market in this era has the variety, investment, exposure of gadgets, ithe innovation of information and the communiation technologies flourish clients needs (Adeyoyin, 2005b).

Rowley, (2001) defined the word "promotion" is the practice of creating cognizance about the services of library and information sciences among library users. With this, this study confine the extent the marketing aspect for the promotion of library and information services.

The categorization of the promotion in marketing services can be the token of the price , other which can meet cost and still others which would result in wages. It is necessary to involve information technology and adhere to by doing so, in addition to enhancing the reputation of library information services and professionals, users can receive healthier services, which is a marketing method. In addition, marketing will be part of your future plans. This is because decisive marketing efforts make libraries valuable inera of information and communication technogies(Madhusudhan, 2008). As in Literature the definition of marketing by Kotler,(1979)"Marketing does not simply means promoting an objects but it has to reveal improvement of services and add value".

### **Literature Review**

The word promotion was defined variously, the meaning of promotion is to suits on our envionment more properly, refered by Kotler, (2000), derives from the marketing association of America, that defined the word promotion that it is the strategy of attention to people and association intentions which include arranging, doing the thoughts, dissemination of thoughts, merchandise, promotion which bring about such a trade that would fulfill concerned people.

Berry, (1995) inferred that the idea of promotion of services and resources is taken to enhance the utilization of services and resources of libraries and non-profit institutions. Which was dealt with the issues in showcasing their services and resources from recent many years. However presently the situation is changed. All sort of libraries fundamentally needs today showcasing.

### **Promotion of Information Services and Resources**

The term promotion includes the use of all auxiliary means to increase sales. Promotion is the process of stimulating demand and increasing sales. Promotion is the phenomenon in which the information center provides the customer with the products that must be provided to the customer through an appropriate mechanism. (Jestin & Parameswari, 2005). Librarians and information professionals have long discussed the concept of promotion in the field of information. Some of these factors relate to learning and implementing promotional strategies. Library work is evolving rapidly and regularly. IT plays an important role in making libraries more successful and focused. The information revolution pressurized the libraries to enhance its services according to current era (Martey, 2000). Information service needs to be marketed on a much larger scale involving various peculiarities. In this contemporary period, it is in this technology and information and communication technology, and in this technology and information and communication technology. In making a tenacious reservation with society, the library is willing to do it to the individual truth and technology to be applied. I am pleased to get the joy of doing it, getting it and promoting it. Here, "this is his book", "the book here" and "the book here" are the leaders (Saravanan, 2010).

Information services must be marketed within a broader context that includes different characteristics. In the age of new technologies, the importance of information services has greatly increased. The use of information technology and ICT-based approaches has become central to libraries today. In order to build strong connections with the community, libraries must embrace and implement web-based trends and information technology in practice. Every bookstore advocates having a website that saves users time by promoting its own resources and promoting its products to generate demand and satisfy readers at the lowest possible cost, thus achieving "every reader has a book" ” and “Every book is a 'reader', this is done for the same market (Saravanan, 2010).

### **Promotional Activities in Libraries**

Librarians are marketers and users are consumers of products. Information plays an important role on the road to national prosperity. As more and more people recognize the importance of information, various information systems have emerged and information services and products continue to expand. For reference, this should be kept in mind when designing, recycling, and using such products and services. If the library values reader satisfaction, it should create and distribute collections based on the latest marketing ideas. Libraries need serious efforts to improve old practices and develop a culture of customer service (Jestin & Parameswari, 2005)

Today, Libraries are confronted with the unprecedented challenge of showing relevance to society the way they offer their services. Today's users have more opportunities to access information. The rapid development of the Internet has greatly changed the entire information phenomenon. To ensure relevance, libraries need to adapt to the needs of their target market. Libraries need to understand that they have earned a presence for their clients. This is a good proof that a library that understands the idea of the market is closest to the customer (Das & Sahu, 2012).

The initial cost of building a library has also increased, but government sponsorships and subsidies have declined, and administrators have had to find other ways to generate revenue. You also need to change the way you serve customers and understand your requirements. Marketing is nothing new, but a more deliberate effort in library and information marketing is needed to better commercialize different types of library and information science in the academic libraries (Rehman, 2008).

To accomplish library user requirements, libraries should be advanced their resources and services through better marketing and promotional approaches. To competing developing web based and other data based services to engage the users. Libraries should work on their services by overhauling their way of life, which is just achievable through consistent activities (Kotler and Fox, 1995). Educational institutes and libraries should advance their services and resources to accomplish political, social, and monetary sponsorship.

### **Objectives of the study**

Objectives of the study were:

1. To identify the current promotional strategies practiced in university libraries.
2. To know about the tools and techniques used for the promotion of information services and resources in the university libraries.
3. To give recommendations for the better utilization of information resources and services.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the current promotional strategies practiced in university libraries?
2. Which type of tools and techniques used for the promotion of information of resources and services?

3. How can the library resources and services be better utilized by applying appropriate promotional activities?

### **Limitations / Delimitations**

The scope of this study includes central libraries of 13 Public Sector Universities and DAIs in Islamabad. The study doesn't include the departmental libraries.

### **Research Design and Methodology**

This study is based on a quantitative research design to investigate the promotional activities and techniques of public sector universities' central libraries in Islamabad through a comprehensive questionnaire. The survey was carried out through a questionnaire; a comprehensive questionnaire covering all aspects of the study's objectives has been opted for collecting data, as it is the most appropriate method for this kind of study.

The target population for this study consists of the central libraries of the 13 recognized public sector universities in Islamabad when conducting the results according to HEC recognized universities. The population of the study is In-charge librarians, and 20 users were made up of the study population. (20 users from each university) selected on convenience sampling technique base on each studied library. Out of the 260 potential respondents, 243 responses were received. However, on scrutiny, 07 responses were found invalid or incomplete, which were rejected.

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

Detailed analysis of the collected data and results obtained have been discussed in this chapter. Various statistical tests have been used to get the output from the collected data using SPSS-19, descriptive statistics have been applied for finding results, as percentage frequency and means.

## Gender groups

The respondents were divided into two groups “1-Male- and 2-Female”. The results shows in (Table-1) states that the majority of the respondents 77.6% are the male respondents of the total respondents, and the remaining 22.4% were female.

**Table-1: Gender wise distribution of the respondents**

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	10	77.6 %
Female	03	22.4 %
Total	13	100 %

## Age wise distribution

Table -2 indicates the age groups divided into six categories, “Below 25, 26-35yrs, 36-45yrs, 46-55yrs, 55 and above”. Their respondents out of 13 there are 61.25 % respondents which are 08 in numbers have 26 to 35 years of age, 23.01% of respondents who are 03 in numbers have 36-45 years of age, and 15.04 % respondents who are just 2 in numbers have 46-55 years ago. Analyzed data shows that most of the in-charge librarian/marketing officers are young.

**Table 4.2: Age wise distribution of the respondents**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Below- 25 yrs	0	0.00
26-35yrs	8	61.25
36-45 yrs	3	23.01
46-55 yrs	2	15.04
55 and above	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	13	100 %

## Statistical Analysis of Librarian/Marketing Officers Data

This section has explored the current promotional strategies used in studied libraries by analyzing collected data from in-charge librarian/marketing officers of 13 public sector university central libraries in Islamabad.

### Promotion strategies using formal and informal methods

In-charge librarians/marketing officers of the studied libraries adopted different methods to promote their information services and resources for creating awareness among their users.

Table -3 presents a summary of collected data in this regard.

The results show in (Table-3) that the highest mean score (2.38) shows that they use to promote their information services and resources *formal methods of advertising* and *formal methods of publication*. The training of the library staff formally or informally is very effective and important for the better usage of resources of an information agency. Data also be demonstrated ( $\mu=2.23$ ) that the respondents hardly use the formal methods to train their library staff. The data shows ( $\mu=2.15$ ) that they use informal methods of online chat to create awareness in their users. Some of the respondents ( $\mu=1.31$ ) used informal method of face to face communication and some ( $\mu=1.92$ ) informal method of telephonic conversation for this purpose, and the data also shows ( $\mu=2.08$ ) that the respondents use a formal method of web 2.0 applications like (face-book page, Twitter, blogs, etc.)and data also shows ( $\mu=2.00$ ) that formal method of exhibitions is also used for promotion.

**Table-3: Methods used for promotion strategies by respondent' librarians (N-13)**

Methods	Rank	Mean	S.D
Informal methods of face to face	7 <sup>th</sup>	1.31	0.630

communications.



Informal methods of telephonic conversation	6 <sup>th</sup>	1.92	1.038
Formal methods of exhibitions.	5 <sup>th</sup>	2.00	0.913
Formal methods of web 2.0 applications, e.g. (face book, twitter, blog, etc. )	4 <sup>th</sup>	2.08	1.320
Informal methods of online chat	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2.15	1.214
Formal training to your library staff	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2.23	1.092
Formal methods of publications.	1 <sup>st</sup>	2.38	1.261
Formal methods of advertising.	1 <sup>st</sup>	2.38	1.044
Informal training to your library staff	1 <sup>st</sup>	2.38	1.325

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Note: 1= don't know 2= not at all, 3= to some extent, 4= to moderate extent, 5= to great extent,

### Statistical Analysis of Users Data

#### Demographic information

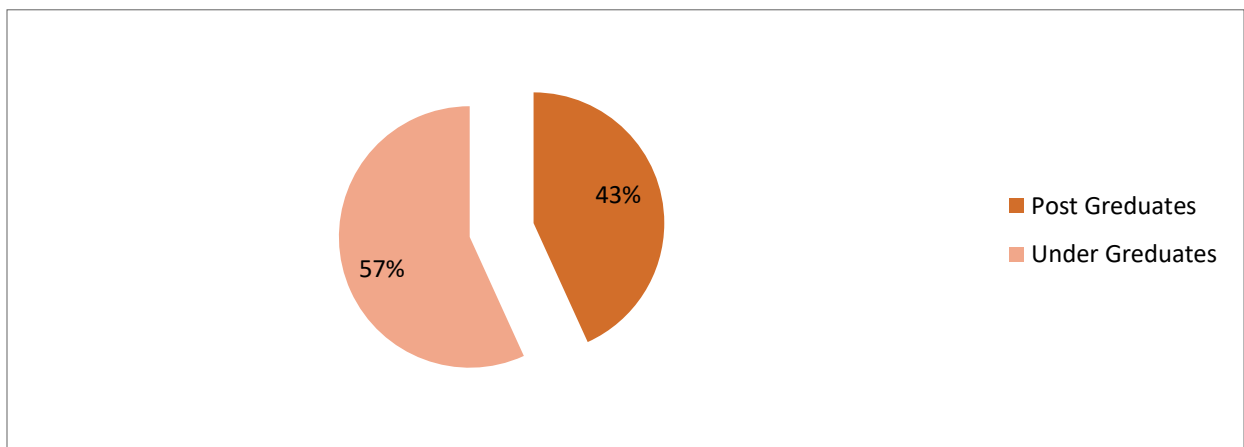
To know the respondents' gender, level of study, library visits, and purpose, the respondents were asked some questions. A total number of 236 responses were collected from users of these libraries. The analyzed data shows (Table-5) that 73.3%, i.e., 166 out of 236, were male respondents and 29.7%, i.e., 70 in numbers out of 236, were female respondents. The majority of the respondents consist of male users of the studied libraries.

**Table -5: Gender information**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	166	70.3
Female	70	29.7
<b>Total</b>	236	100%

### **Class wise distribution**

The results show in (Figure-) that most of the study respondents were post-graduate students, which is 57% of the total responses, which means MS students of the studied universities, and 43% of the respondents were undergraduate students. The results describe that the number of post-graduate students is greater to visit the library to fulfill their information needs, based on their research studies, than the number of undergraduate students.



**Figure-1: Class wise distribution (N-236)**

### **Promotional techniques and activities in libraries**

The respondents were asked to rate the statements on which promotional technique is useful for gaining new information from their libraries. The highest mean ( $\mu=2.53$ ) in results (table-6) shows that majority of the respondents got awareness through social networking websites (e.g., yahoo groups, Twitter page, blog), and the mean ( $\mu=2.29$ ) shows that in these social networking websites library's Facebook page is very effective for creating awareness. Most respondents describe ( $\mu=2.39$ ) that they got awareness using face to face communication, by telephonic conversation and some time by chat, asking questions and the library staff. E-

marketing technique and they are also used for user awareness (resulting  $\mu=2.32$ ). The results show ( $\mu=2.20$ ) that written communication method with users is also used for creating awareness. The results describe that some of the respondents ( $\mu=1.99$  and  $\mu 2.06$ ) are aware of their information services and resources activities by display on boards and posters are used for promotional activities in the library.

**Table -6: Promotional techniques and activities in libraries(N-236)**

Statement	Rank	Mean	S.D
Social networking websites (e.g., Twitter page, blog) are very useful for gaining new information.	1 <sup>st</sup>	2.53	1.229
Verbal communication (such as face to face, telephone, chat, etc.) is very useful for gaining new information.	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2.39	1.235
Facebook page is very useful for gaining new information.	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2.29	1.153
E-marketing techniques (such as web pages, social media websites, flicker, library blogs, etc.) Are very useful for gaining new information.	4 <sup>th</sup>	2.32	1.176
Written communication with users (such as emails, notification about conferences/seminars/workshops) is very useful for gaining new information.	5 <sup>th</sup>	2.20	1.087
Library display board is very useful for gaining new information	6 <sup>th</sup>	2.06	1.034
Library posters are very useful for gaining new information.	7 <sup>th</sup>	1.99	0.934

Note: 1= Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5= strongly Agree,

## Discussion

This research study was achieved by getting the respondents' perception of the university's central libraries in Islamabad and then analyzing their opinions and inferring the results.

100% of the respondents agreed that Planning and implementing promotional activities provides an opportunity to assess the quality and usage of information resources and services. Promotional activities do not create awareness but also justify the budget spent on the acquisition of information. The majority of the respondents, 92.3 %, agreed that Promotional activities help justify the cost involved in the Generation/acquisition of information.

Promotional activities develop the information services and resources in any library. Accumulative 92.3% of respondents agreed that the promotional program should anticipate any significant change or development of library and information services and resources.

The majority of the studied libraries offered formal user education/ information literacy programs of information services to their users. 70.2% of the in-charge librarians offer formal user education or information literacy program to their users. User feedback is an essential element for the evaluation of promotional activities. 92.3% of respondents agreed that user feedback is essential to assessing promotional techniques' quality for information services and resources.

Training /workshops are most commonly used ( $\mu=1.62$ ) as a tool for the promotion of information, in-charge librarians of the studied libraries were creating awareness among their users by a brief demo of library information services and resources. Lectures and conferences for the respondents were also being used to promote information services and resources. Results confirmed that library fairs, seminars, and exhibitions are used as promotional tools in studied libraries.

## Conclusion

To provide the best possible service to the community, the libraries maintain highly motivated staff to make effective use of the information resources and meet the users' demands. Formal or informal training of the library staff is very effective and important for the better usage of information resources. Promotional activities help to justify the cost involved in the generation/acquisition of information. The promotional program was able to anticipate any significant change or development in needs of the users of library and information services and resources. Higher authorities are cooperative with library staff for promotional activities in their libraries. They never face difficulties from their higher authorities, and they freely promote their services and resources.

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