



AN INQUIRY INTO MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL SERVICES: USERS PERSPECTIVE ON PUBLIC LIBRARY. A STUDY ON SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY

Library Science

Dr. R. Maheshkumar

HOD & Librarian, VLB Janakiammal College Of Arts And Science College, Kovaipudur-42

ABSTRACT

Marketing of products in industries is very much essential to increase sale and consequently to gain the profit, however in public environment like book wagon's promotion and marketing of library and information sector is required to aware the library services. This paper enumerates the concept of library promotion and marketing of library services. Public libraries are having more type of collections. To promote the collection in use it is necessary to market library products. This paper suggests practical solutions, ways and means of the library services.

KEYWORDS

Library promotions, Marketing of library services, Marketing strategies, Service Quality, SERVQUAL, T-test, one-way ANOVA analysis

INTRODUCTION

Libraries are considered as treasure of knowledge. It is also known as storehouse of knowledge. The Libraries are approaching important challenges such as educational approaches, the impact of technology, new methods for information provision and declining budgets have meant that marketing is now so essential that it cannot be considered a separate function. Many libraries have come to appreciate the contribution and application that marketing concepts can make.

Marketing in service organization includes seven concepts, such as product, place, promotion, price, process, persons, and physical evidence. It's viewed as set of strategies and techniques that belong to administrators other than librarians. However librarians are involved in the process of marketing.

Definition

Marketing is a process which carries goods from producers to ultimate consumers. Marketing, in its broader sense, is the social instrument through which the material goods and culture of a society are transmitted to its members. Marketing, in the library context, refers to those instrument through which information are transmitted to its members.

According to Kotler, "Marketing is the analysis, planning, implementation and control of carefully formulated programs designed to bring about voluntary exchanges of values with target markets for the purpose of achieving organizational objectives. It relies heavily on designing the organization's offering in terms of target markets needs and desires, and on using effective pricing, communication, and distribution to inform, motivate, and service the markets."

Likewise Stanton has opined, "Marketing is a total system of interacting business activities to plan, price, promote and distribute want satisfying products and services, and present to potential customers."

The above definitions call for various activities in marketing. They are,

- Market research and customers analysis
- Development of products and services.
- Pricing
- Distribution
- Promotion
- Evolution of products and services.

All the above mentioned activities of marketing as applied to other industrial sectors are equally applicable in the area of information products and services. Whether it is for profit or nonprofit sector, methods remain the same the policy varies.

The application of promotional methods in libraries includes:

- Increasing the library credit
- Increasing the exposure of library to the present competitive environment
- Increasing the use of library resources/ facilities.
- Training the users.
- Changing the user's expectations.
- Raising the users awareness of the available services
- Promoting the users positive perception of libraries.

According to Rowley, promotion consists of five aspects such as **public relations, sales promotion, personal selling, direct marketing and advertising.**

Promotional methods in the field of **public relations**, we can mention the followings:

Preparing and installing the introductory signs of library services in the library entry.

- Preparing news reports, video, radio, and TV program on different types services, resources, and activities of the library
- Presenting library festival news and events in the library website.
- Preparing and releasing library newsletters.

Sales promotion includes incentives and short -term motivators to encourage buying and selling products or services. Methods of sales promotion in libraries include the drawing lotteries and granting prizes to individuals, delivery tokens to individuals with discount, preparing and distributing the advertising items holding emblems, address, contact number, and library websites address such as bag pen, pencil, notebook, and calendar, and also holding reading contests and competitions.

Another dimension of **personal selling** is defined as introducing goods and services verbally with which the presence of one or more possible purchases is possible with the purpose of supplying product and offering services. One of the benefits of this method is the direct feedback and action on the basis of the final market.

Another dimension of promotion is **direct marketing** that enables organizations to forward their very private, customized and personal messages to individual customers. Direct marketing also includes using mail, telephone or other non-personal communication devices for connection with customers or receiving certain customer's response.

The **advertising** dimension is also one of the most important and effective marketing tools which is applied in notifying, informing, convincing, and reminding the clients, It can play an important role in providing the true information about the customers training and services about the features and qualities of product. Advertising could be done in different ways in a library such as supplying and distributing brochures and guidelines to introduce different services to clients, installing signs, banners, and advertising billboards across the city, the use of weblog to introduce library and its services, and the use of the library website.

Identifying and applying the most effective promotional methods in this important library has become necessary. The study findings could help the library authorities to further enhance the library usage.

Review of literature

There are enormous studies on library marketing. However, there are not enough studies focusing on the promotion principle of marketing. For example, through a questionnaire survey, Hood and Henderson investigated the branding activity in the UK public library service. They found that better marketing and branding activity would result in attracting current non-users. A study on the academic library websites

for a marketing approach, promotional and public relations activities showed that promotional activities of Malaysian academic libraries were adequate.

Social media have been studied as a library promotion tool. For example, Fasola examined librarian's perception and acceptance of the use of Face book and Twitter in promoting library services in Oyo state, Nigeria. Most libraries had Face book profiles, while only a few had Twitter accounts. The Librarians acknowledged using Face book and Twitter to promote library services. Further, an online survey by Yi confirmed that library websites and social media were the most effective promotion techniques from the Australian academic librarian's perspectives.

Ramos- Eclevia states that channels of communications between librarians and users must be open and accessible to build relationship marketing. Therefore, she surveyed university librarian's attitude towards *LibRadio* as a marketing tool. It was found that the library radio show could be an effective communication channel to promote library resources and services, and to break stereotypes about librarians and libraries in the academic community.

Ilea define public relations as the creation, maintenance, and continuity of mutual understanding between the organization and clients. Review of literature reveals that although the clients and providing services to them is the philosophy of library existence, no research has been done on the effectiveness of library promotional methods from the library clients' perspective. Hence, this study on promotional methods in an important Public library in Coimbatore city from the users' perspective has been undertaken.

Scope of the Study

The study will cover public library of Coimbatore city only. Even though, Coimbatore is one of the popular towns of Tamil Nadu and its second largest populated city in Tamil Nadu state and also more small business are located in this city. The Public library is so popular among the people of the Coimbatore. There is more scope of the study the user's perspective satisfaction level from different clause of people in

the study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out service quality along each of the five Servqual dimension of public library in Coimbatore city.
- To determine the effect of promotional methods on clients use of library services and resources
- To identify the efficient promotional methods in terms of clients' use of library services and resources.
- To improve the image of the library.

Hypothesis

- There is no significant mean difference in the respondents' perception of services based on their Gender.
- There is no significant mean difference in the respondents' perception of services based on their Educational Qualification
- There is no significant mean difference in the respondents' perception of services based on their Income
- There is no significant mean difference in the respondents' perception of services based on their Occupation

Research Methodology

The Target population of this survey was the clients of the Public Library of Coimbatore city. The researcher took 300 respondents as sample size on the basis of Disproportionate Stratified Random Sampling Techniques. Arithmetic Mean, Standard Deviation, Independent

T-test, Percentage analysis, and one-way ANOVA analysis were used as tools for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed by using SPSS. A paired t-test analysis carried to understand the gap between library users expectation cum perception, independent t-test to understand the influence of gender on service perception and one way ANOVA (Analysis of variance) to understand the relationship between Education, Income, Occupation and perception of service quality.

Table 1. The effect of traditional methods on library usage Analysis.

Servqual Dimension	Method	Perception Mean score	Expectation Mean Score	GAP
Public relations	Signs or banners in the library entrance that introduce different library services and resources.	5.98	6.54	-0.56**
	Getting commends and receiving respondents suggestions and critiques about library services, staff behaviors and the like	5.55	6.76	-0.21*
	Inspecting respondents complaints in person	6.01	6.89	-0.89**
	Holding workshop on using library for new members	5.99	6.86	-0.87**
	Holding book fairs on different occasions	6.64	6.71	-0.07
	Over all Public relations score	6.01	6.80	-0.79**
Sales Promotion	Conducting lottery and rewarding active library members	5.46	6.47	-1.01**
	Granting discount coupons for using Public library to library members	5.86	6.77	-0.89**
	Preparing and distributing advertising items holding mark, address, contact number and library website address.	6.01	6.43	-0.42**
	Exposure of new or the most used resources on the vitrine or closet near the entrance door.	6.12	6.31	-0.19*
	Overall Sales Promotion score	5.93	6.27	-0.30**
Personal Selling	Product Demonstration	6.47	6.53	0.60**
	Illiterate Prospects	6.34	6.45	0.11*
	Traditional Necessity	6.78	6.81	0.03
	Emerging of an Entirely New type of product	6.66	6.76	-0.10
	Over all Personal Selling score	6.59	6.69	-0.10
Direct Marketing	Interior Marketing	5.78	6.69	-0.91**
	Face to Face Selling	6.27	6.54	-0.27*
	Direct Mail	6.01	6.32	-0.31**
	Catalogues	5.98	6.34	-0.36**
	Tele Marketing	6.21	6.55	-0.34**
	Over all Direct Marketing score	6.04	6.43	-0.39**
Advertising	Printed guidelines and procedures for introducing library services and sections	6.89	6.88	+0.01
	Printed guidelines for using library resources	6.87	6.67	+0.20
	Self-learning or instructional brochures	6.88	6.57	+0.31*
	Library guide boards in corridors and halls of holy shrine	6.34	6.29	+0.05
	Signs, banners or library advertising billboards around the city	6.48	6.23	+0.25*
	One on one introduction of library services by librarians	6.79	6.68	0.11*
	Library billboard	6.32	6.46	-0.14*
	Overall Advertising score	6.58	6.67	+0.90*

*Denotes Significance at 5% Level and ** Denotes Significance at 1% level

a) Gender of the Respondent and Library Services Dimension

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant mean difference in the respondents' perception of services based on their Gender.

Table 2. Result of Interdependence T-Test on Gender of the Respondent And Services Perception

Service Quality Dimensions	Male		Female		t-value
	Mean	S.Dev	Mean	S.Dev	
Public relations	6.00	0.86	6.04	0.88	0.082
Sales Promotion	5.87	0.75	5.76	0.66	0.071
Personal Selling	5.99	0.66	5.85	0.99	0.008
Direct Marketing	5.84	1.01	5.21	1.31	5.847**
Advertising	6.09	0.46	6.02	0.56	1.021

** Denotes Significance at 1% level

Since P-Value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance. Hence there is significance between Gender of the Respondent and Services Perception.

b) Educational Qualification of the Respondent and Library Services Dimension

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant mean difference in the respondents' perception of services based on their Educational Qualification.

Table 3. ANOVA Educational Qualifications of the Respondent And Services Perception

Service Quality Dimensions	F-Value	P-Value	Educational Qualification			
			<H.Sc	UG	PG	Formal Education
Public relations	2.399	0.068	5.89	5.87	6.09	6.23
Sales Promotion	7.471	0.000*	6.04	6.02	6.44	5.12

Table 5. ANOVA Occupation of the Respondent And Services Perception

Service Quality Dimensions	F- Value	P- Value	Occupation			
			Govt. Employed	Professionals	Business	Others
Public relations	2.308	0.077	5.12	5.01	4.90	5.24
Sales Promotion	1.159	0.326	5.33	5.32	5.15	5.23
Personal Selling	0.555	0.645	5.89	5.26	5.40	5.32
Direct Marketing	0.467	0.706	5.91	5.88	5.50	5.36
Advertising	0.467	0.706	6.03	6.11	6.05	6.07

Note: Significance at 5% level

Since P-Value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence there is no significance between Occupation of the Respondent and Services Perception.

Findings

- 1) There is a wide gap in between the perception and expectation of the respondents of this public library. Most of the respondents were satisfied with the respect to Public relations of service quality. The overall score of Public relations shows that most of the respondents were satisfied because of the Inspecting respondent's complaints in person to solve the service problem.
- 2) The researcher interpreted that most of the respondents were satisfied with the respect to Sales promotion, since the gap is less than any other dimension. The overall score of Sales promotion shows that most of the respondents are satisfied because of the Granting discount coupons for using Public library,
- 3) The researcher shows that most of the respondents were satisfied with the respect to Personal Selling dimension of service quality. The overall score of Personal Selling shows that most of the respondents were satisfied because of Product Demonstration to library users.
- 4) The researcher interpreted that most of the respondents were highly satisfied with the respect to Direct Marketing dimension of service quality. The overall score of Direct Marketing shows that most of the respondents were satisfied because of the Interior Marketing for using Public library
- 5) The researcher shows that most of the respondents were satisfied with the respect to Advertising dimension of service quality. The overall score of Advertising shows that most of the respondents were satisfied because of the Printed guidelines for using library resources.

CONCLUSION

- 1) The study investigated library client's views concerning the effect

Personal Selling	1.802	0.147	5.95	5.92	5.99	5.72
Direct Marketing	0.991	0.397	5.56	5.57	5.42	5.17
Advertising	0.209	0.890	6.62	6.78	6.66	6.59

** Denotes Significance at 5% level

Since P-Value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance. Hence there is significance between Educational Qualifications of the Respondent and Services Perception.

c) Income of the Respondent and Library Services Dimension

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant mean difference in the respondents' perception of services based on their Income.

Table 4. ANOVA Income Groups of the Respondent And Services Perception

Service Quality Dimensions	F- Value	P- Value	<than 2 lakh	2 lakh – 5 lakh	> than 5 lakh
Public relations	2.308	0.770	5.71	5.09	5.34
Sales Promotion	1.159	0.326	5.32	5.15	5.23
Personal Selling	0.555	0.645	5.26	5.40	5.32
Direct Marketing	0.467	0.706	5.39	5.50	5.36
Advertising	0.366	0.778	6.11	6.05	6.07

Note: Significance at 5% level

Since P-Value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence there is no significance between Income of the Respondent and Services Perception.

d) Occupation of the Respondent and Library Services Dimension

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant mean difference in the respondents' perception of services based on their Occupation.

of library promotional methods on using the library services and resources. The findings indicate that “guiding and responding clients” have the greatest effect on the client's use of library resources and services. As such, we can realize the importance of personal interaction between the librarian and the clients while being familiarized with the services and encouraged to use the services. Therefore employing numerous librarians with high communication skills would be highly important.

- 2) Of the traditional promotional methods, the advertising category methods have also been more effective in persuading clients to use the library services. It may be due to their high quality materials or their large and available number. On the other hand, the client benefitting from these tools achieves the ability to use the resources continuously, independently, and without relying on others. However, the effect of the public relations and sales promotion category (traditional) methods on using library service has been sufficient: therefore, a major revision is highly recommended in this regard.
- 3) Given the obtained results and the methods suggested more use of clients from the wide resources and services of this library through which they can contribute to this library to achieve its goals and also reach out for its actual scientific and academic position.

REFERENCES

- 1) Fasola O S (2015), Perceptions and acceptance of librarians towards using Facebook and Twitter to promote library services in Oyo State, Nigeria, The Electronic Library, 33(5) 870-882
- 2) Garoufallo E, Zafeiriou G, Sitari R and Balapanidou E, (2013), Marketing applications in Greek academic library services, Library Management, 34 (8/9) 632-649
- 3) Heidari A, (2005), Total quality management and marketing in the library, Baharestan Journal, 465-10.
- 4) Ilea YA, (2009), Professional Public Relations (Jajarmi: Tehran)
- 5) Johns, N, (1993), “ Quality Management in Hospitality Industry: Recent Developments”, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, Vol. 5(1), pp.10-15

- 6) Kotlar P, (1985) Marketing of Non-profit Organizations, 2nd Edition (PHI).
- 7) Kaur K, (2009) Marketing the academic library on the web, *Library Management*, 30(6/7) 454-468
- 8) Motevali K, (1993), Public Relations and Advertising (Behjat; Tehran)
- 9) Parasuraman, A. Zeithaml and Berry, Leonard L, (1988), "SERVQUAL: A Multiple item Scale for Measuring Consumer Perception of Service Quality" *Journal of Retailing*, Vol.64 (Spring), PP.12-40
- 10) Rowley J E, (2006), *Information Marketing* (Ashgate Publishing Limited, England)
- 11) Ramos- Eclevia M S, (2012) Lib Radio: Librarians sa Radyo Library Marketing from online to on Air
- 12) Shapoori S, (2008), Marketing in libraries. *Journal of Library and Information Science*, 11 (1) 157-184
- 13) Woodruffe H, (1995), *Services Marketing* (Pitman: London)
- 14) Yi Z, (2016), Effective techniques for the promotion of Library Services and Resources, *Information Research*, 21(1) 1-22