

Marketing information products and services in the public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of this study was to examine the attitude of librarians and information professionals towards marketing and to know how the concept of marketing is applied in practice to the university libraries of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan.

Design/methodology/approach: The study is based on a survey questionnaire. Total population of the study is consisted of 110 library professionals of the fifteen public sector universities of KP. The target population is consisted of all the information professionals who had at least a postgraduate degree in library and information science. A total of 96 questionnaires were received back dully filled in, of which 90 of the questionnaires were found valid for analysis. The response rate was found to be 87%.

Research limitations: The study is limited to those university information professionals who had at least a postgraduate degree in library and information science.

Key findings: The study found that information professionals of university libraries had a positive attitude towards marketing in libraries. Lack of relevant skills and exposure on the concept of marketing discourages the information professionals from embracing the principles of marketing in their libraries. The study revealed that the rapid growth of information and budget cuts have compelled information professionals to adopt marketing strategies in their libraries. Lack of knowledge, lack of support, lack of IT infrastructure, shrinking budget, least interest by the authorities and inconvenient location of the library buildings were some of the major problems hindering the application of marketing to information products and services.

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Practical implications: The study will help information professionals working in university libraries of Pakistan in general and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to design ways and means for the adoption of marketing information products and services.

Contribution to knowledge: The findings of this study will help in framing appropriate policies related to the marketing of information products and services in the university libraries of KP.

Paper type: Research

Keywords: Marketing; Information products; Information services; Libraries; University libraries; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; Information professionals

Introduction

Marketing is a term that does not always come to mind when speaking about library activities, but marketing has become an incredibly valuable method in a quickly evolving digital world to support libraries and their services to customers. (Cole & Graves, 2010). The concept of library marketing was introduced in 1876 in North America. Kleindel (2007) explained several marketing approaches i.e., segmenting and targeting clienteles, advertising, mail, streetcar signs, telephone solicitation, banners, posters, etc. According to AMA (2017) “Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large”. Kotler and Armstrong (2006) defined marketing as “marketing is the organization’s effective management of exchange relations with various clients in order to achieve the organization’s objectives”.

Due to the introduction of advanced technical storage, processing, retrieval and other modern facilities, libraries and knowledge centers have become profit-making enterprises in the present world. The knowledge must hit the customer desk of operation, whether it is a lecture hall, a research facility, or information centers (Cole & Graves, 2010). Until 1970, the idea of marketing was limited to companies that provided goods rather than services, nearly entirely. Even though S.R Ranganathan realized the concept of adapting marketing to library practices in 1930s, on the bases of which he proposed the five laws of library science. These laws had the marketing concept in their core (Kumar, 2014). Marketing in respect of libraries play an important role in promoting their information resources, leveraging emerging technology and predicting trends.

Information Products refer to sources of information available in hard and soft form, such as books, CDs, DVDs, Journals articles, magazines, proceedings, electronic journals, thesis and dissertations, manuscripts, newspapers, databases, online publications, and commercial online databases accessible via the internet and other databases accessible via various providers of private networks. (Hazam, 2017). Typical

information services are access to databases, current awareness services, indexing and abstracting service, digital library services, circulation services, internet access, newspaper clipping service, display of new arrivals, user orientation, self-check in check out for issue and return of books, book exhibitions, conferences, seminars and workshops, reference services, interlibrary loan, literature searching techniques, reprography, printing of all types of reading materials, and portal web-based information services (Ravichandran & Babu 2016). Marketing in the context of information resources can be characterized in a broad sense as the idea of gracefully aiding & fulfilling the information requirements of all those interested in the fields of education, academia, research and development, industry, business, etc. To make available right information to the right customer at the right time, libraries should follow marketing strategy. According to Nolan (1998), most of the libraries either special, academic & reference, face a common issue: "do more with less and less."

A cursory examination of the relevant literature indicates that very little research has been carried out on the various aspects of marketing of library resources and services of higher educational institutions in Pakistan. Studies conducted elsewhere on marketing of library resources and services have mostly focused on the general aspects of marketing. There are only a few of the studies that focusses on the attitude of information professionals towards marketing information products and services. Information professionals' attitude towards marketing their libraries' information products and services is more important than other aspects such as application, strategies, and techniques. A positive attitude of librarians and information professionals towards marketing make it easier to implement it with letter and spirit. The major aim of this research study is to ascertain the attitude of librarians and information professionals of the public sector universities of KP towards marketing of information products and services and know the association between the attitude of library professionals and their individual organizational characteristics. The study also gives an insight into the psyche

of information professionals towards marketing and suggests ways and means to promote information products and services.

Literature review

An overview of the available literature on marketing of library resources and services shows that studies have already been carried out on library marketing, especially in the developed countries. However, the number of such studies in the developing world are only a few. Panda (2021) conducted a study on marketing of academic library products and services with reference to social media tools who stated that due to the ever-increasing flood of literature and the application of ICTs in everyday life, marketing has become a vital tool to make the masses aware of the library resources and services. Libraries are considered as service institutions that support the cause of education. Therefore, it is essential to promote library resources and services among library users and in today's world, social media has immense potential to meet the marketing needs of academic libraries. Block and Edzan (2002) conducted a study on information marketing in Sri Lankan academic libraries which described the marketing of free based information services of academic libraries in Sri Lanka. The study found that most of sampled libraries offered information services to their customers without any fee. The study concluded that libraries of educational institutions should aggressively market their information resources and services and must move from the provision of traditional library services to a more ICT based information service.

Wenhong (2006) in a study on Marketing and Services Promotion in the LCAS has described different strategies used for the promotion of information resources and services by the library of Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). He reported that libraries of the CAS applied different traditional and non-traditional tools to market their informational resources. The study reported that despite of the many activities of marketing, the library of LCAS had a haphazard and weak marketing strategy at the organizational level. According to Patange (2013), marketing information products and services make information professionals to know the actual requirements of

the customers which will not only help in the provision of quality information services to users but will also help in taking good management decisions. Bhardwaj and Jain (2016) assert that most of the libraries of developing countries don't have a marketing culture. Libraries of developing countries need to prepare marketing plans and strategies and conduct out-reach programs to market their resources and services to the maximum use. Khan and Bhatti (2012) conducted a study on the usage of social media (SM) marketing in the libraries of Pakistan. The study explored various applications of Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Wikis, LinkedIn, and other SM platforms in marketing library resources and services. The study also ascertained librarians' attitude towards the usage of SM in marketing information products and services. Findings of the study showed a positive attitude of the librarians towards marketing in libraries. The study reported that almost all the librarians were of the opinion that social media helped to market library resources and services effectively and efficiently. The study found that least training opportunities, lack of social media usage skills, problems related to privacy and identity theft, low internet speed and power outages were the major hurdles for applying to market library resources and services. Habiba (2015) and Ternenge (2019) in their study also reported similar findings who assert that librarians have a positive attitude towards marketing library products and services. Their study further reported that social media can be used effectively by information professionals for marketing their libraries' resources and services. Vij (2012) argued that in the modern-day libraries and information centers, the need for marketing information products and related services have risen due to the pressure of rising innovations, customer demands, high costs and budget reductions.

A study conducted by Rind, Subhpoto and Sheikh (2017) on marketing information products and services in the university libraries of Jamshoro, Pakistan, reported that librarians had a progressive approach towards marketing in libraries. Results of the study revealed that ICT has made it relevant and necessary to make their users informed about all the library facilities and services they provide. The study found

that the key factors responsible for marketing information resources in university libraries are the compression of library budgets, information explosion, the introduction of ICTs in libraries and the unfamiliarity of library customers with library resources. According to Sharma and Pathak (2020) implementing marketing strategies in libraries help in developing a user-centric library atmosphere to serve individual reader. Marketing information products and services help to provide better access to information so that the visibility, accessibility, and image of the library can be improved further. The usage of library resources like books in both hard and soft form can be enhanced through effective marketing strategies. Moreover, the marketing processes in libraries helps to attract potential readers to use library services to the optimum level and to save the time as well as reduce the communication gap between the information professionals and the readers.

Kavulya (2004), in his study on marketing in university libraries in Kenya, concluded that marketing should be an important activity in the libraries of higher educational institutions. Library workers know well about the strength and weaknesses of their information products and services therefore it is imperative on their part to bring more readers to their libraries through marketing strategies. Similarly, Muhammad and Zhiwei (2021) undertaken a study on how marketing in academic libraries is carried out in Baluchistan, Pakistan and what approaches are adopted by librarians to make the users informed about library resources and services. Their study reported that librarians had an encouraging attitude towards marketing of library products. They knew well how and when to market their libraries' resources and services. Mandrekar (2020) in his research study on the role of SNS in promoting library resources and services reported that social media or SNS proved to be the best medium for connecting readers with the library stuff. ICTs, especially the social media platforms, have narrowed the gap between libraries and the customers. The aim of this study was to explain how successfully the libraries used social networking sites especially during Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown situations to advertise and support the library and information products and services to their customers. The study

used an online questionnaire for data collection. College librarians were the target population. The study opined that SNS popularly known as social media have played a significant role in the marketing of library resources during this pandemic era. During the lockdown period, librarians frequently update their libraries' websites and inform users about their products and services through Facebook, WhatsApp, and other social media platforms. Sharma and Pathak (2020) assert that to improve revenue and make profit, the marketing of library products and services is very important. Marketing is an integral aspect of every corporate strategic strategy like libraries and information centers and serves as a customer loyalty tool. The successful use of different marketing methods may greatly increase productivity in the promotion of library resources and services. Similarly, Sharma and Bhardwaj (2009) argued that marketing in libraries and information centers is not merely an approach to develop and promote new services or resources, but it also makes the users aware about the existing services and resources and determine their appropriateness.

Clifford and Olurotimi (2018) studied marketing of university library resources in Nigeria. The study showed that most of the library resources and services, such as interlibrary credit services, binding services, current awareness services, collection and delivery services, documentation services, abstracting and indexing services were not known to most of the customers. The research showed that the lack of awareness about library products and services impacted the access to and proper utilization of library resources by users. The study proposed different strategies to promote library product and services. Waheed, Rafiq and Soroya (2017) reported that marketing is administrative process through which libraries and information centers promote and exchange their products and services. The study found that proactive marketing skills have been developed by library staff in public libraries in Pakistan. They found that marketing strategies and techniques are not applied at the desired level by university librarians in the country. Oljide and Jacob (2017) argued that several libraries and information centers work hard to satisfy their clientele within their limits, imposed by a small budget. The

budget cuts have affected the service quality of several libraries. The study urged library professionals to focus on marketing of information products and services through well-organized marketing strategies.

Study objectives

Following are the major objectives of the study:

1. To examine the attitude of library professionals of the public sector university libraries of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan
2. To determine the association between the attitude of library professionals and their individual organizational characteristics
3. To examine the existing resources and services provided by libraries in relation to marketing
4. To ascertain the level of the principles of marketing being practiced in the target libraries.
5. To identify the problems faced by library professionals in marketing their information resources and services.

Methodology

The total population of the study consists of 110 library professionals working in the fifteen public universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). A semi-structured questionnaire based on several similar studies such as Muhammad & Zhiwai (2021), Oladide & Jacob (2018), Kumar (2014) and Martey (2000) with five items designed to measure the marketing of information products and services in the libraries of public universities of KP was utilized for data collection. A panel of three experts, two of whom were LIS teachers, and a professor of statistics were involved to assess the content and face validity of the questionnaire. Their suggestions on content validity of the questionnaire were used to modify the questionnaire items before conducting this study. Since the questionnaire was developed using similar studies and also the panel of experts were pretty sure that the questionnaire was perfect and can meet the objectives of the study therefore they advised the authors of this study not to pre-test the instrument. As given in table-1, Cronbach Alpha was implied to examine

the internal consistency of the five main scales of the questionnaire.

Table-1, Reliability analysis of the study

S. No	Scale	Number of Items	Chronbach Alpha (n:200)
1	Need of marketing	8	.84
2.	Application of marketing	8	.80
3	Attitude towards marketing	8	.89
4	Marketing planning and practices	6	.90
5	Problems faced	8	.89

Questionnaires were administered to all 110 library professionals. The target population consisted of all the information professionals who had at least a postgraduate degree in library and information science (LIS). Fifty percent of the questionnaires were administered by hand through Library and information science students studying at the Department of LIS, University of Peshawar. Whereas, rest of the questionnaires were administered via email and WhatsApp to the target population. A total of 96 questionnaires were received back dully filled in of which 90 of the questionnaires were found valid for analysis. The response rate was found to be 87%.

Results

Gender-wise analysis

As shown in table-2, gender wise analysis showed that out of 90 study participants, 72 (80%) were males and 18 (38.33%) were females.

Table 2, gender wise distribution of the respondents (n=90)

Respondents	Frequency	%
Male	72	80

Female	18	20
Total	90	100

The need of marketing information products and services

As given in table-3, the attitude of information professionals towards marketing was encouraging. Most of the respondents (54%) stated that they were not reluctant to adopt marketing practices in their libraries. A small number of information professionals (14.44%) indicated that library users were familiar with information products and services as compared to 35.55% of the study participants who strongly disagreed with the statement. 7.77% of the respondents were strongly agreed that it is difficult to measure users' information needs whereas a majority of them were either dis-agreed or strongly dis-agreed with the statement. About 87% of the information professionals indicated that planning marketing tactics help in examining the significance and usage of information products and services. Almost all the participants stated that the growing amount of Information and budget cuts made librarians to embrace marketing. About 90% of the respondents indicated that Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) have made information professionals to adopt marketing. Similarly, more than 94% of the participants believed online technologies have significantly encouraged marketing information products and services.

Table, 3, the need of marketing information products and services (n=90)

Agreement, number of study participants and percentage						
S. No.	Statement	SA	A	N	DA	SD
1	Information professionals are reluctant to adopt marketing in libraries	24 (26.66%)	14 (15.55%)	3 (3.33%)	23 (25.55%)	26 (28.88%)
2	Library users are familiar with information products and services	13 (14.44%)	16 (17.77%)	4 (4.44%)	25 (27.77%)	32 (35.55%)
3	Information professionals finds it difficult to measure users' information needs	7 (7.77%)	18 (20%)	14 (15.55%)	25 (27.77%)	26 (28.88%)
4	Planning marketing tactics help in examining the significance and usage of	51 (56.66%)	28 (31.11%)	6 (6.66%)	4 (4.44%)	1 (1.11%)

	information products and services					
5	Planning marketing tactics help in defending the expenditure incurred on library products and services	46 (51.11%)	34 (37.77%)	6 (6.66%)	2 (2.22%)	2 (2.22%)
6	The growing amount of Information and budget cuts made librarians to embrace marketing	60 (66.66%)	28 (31.11%)	2 (2.22%)	00	00
7	Information Communication Technologies necessitated information professionals to adopt marketing	66 (73.33%)	16 (17.77%)	6 (6.66%)	2 (2.22%)	00
8	Online technologies have significantly encouraged marketing information products and services	69 (76.66%)	17 (18.88%)	4 (4.44%)	00	00

Key: SA: Strongly disagree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, DA: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

Application of marketing to information products and services programs

As regard the application of marketing to information products and services, as given in table 4, a large majority of the study participants (about 93%) were either strongly agreed or agreed that library schools should include marketing as a subject in their curriculum. About 86% of the information professionals as whole indicated that traditional techniques of marketing of information products and services were for promotion only. More than 87% of the respondents showed that the term “reader” should be replaced with the term “customer”. About 54% of the study participants believed marketing information products and services overburdens the responsibilities of information professionals. It is encouraging to note that a large majority of the participants did not agree with the statement “Marketing information products and services do not suit the information profession”. More than 83% of the library professionals indicated that lack of marketing skill discourages information professionals to adopt marketing in libraries. Similarly, more than 86% of the study respondents did not agree at all that marketing information products and services seldom help in the use of library resources. When the

participants were asked to give their agreement regarding “more staff and finance is needed to adopt marketing in libraries”, it was observed that almost 60% of them were either strongly agreed or agreed as per the agreement scale while a negligible respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

Table-4, Application of marketing to information products and services programs (n=90)

Agreement, Number of study participants and Percentage						
S. No.	Statement	SA	A	N	DA	SD
1	Library schools should include marketing in their curriculum	59 (65.5 5%)	25 (27.7 7%)	4 (4.44 %)	2 (2.22 %)	00
2	Traditional techniques of Marketing information products and services are for promotion only	50 (55.5 5%)	28 (31.1 1%)	8 (8.88 %)	3 (3.33 %)	1 (1.11 %)
3	Information professionals should replace the term 'reader' with 'customer'	55 (61.1 1%)	24 (26.6 6%)	6 (6.66 %)	3 (3.33 %)	2 (2.22 %)
4	marketing information products and services overburdens the responsibilities of information professionals	25 (27.7 7%)	24 (26.6 6%)	8 (8.88 %)	22 (24.4 4%)	11 (12.22 %)
5	Marketing information products and services do not suit the information profession	5 (5.55 %)	4 (4.44 %)	3 (3.33 %)	15 (16.6 6%)	63 (70%)
6	lack of marketing skill discourages information professionals to adopt marketing in libraries	50 (55.5 5%)	25 (27.7 7%)	1 (1.11 %)	8 (8.88 %)	6 (6.66 %)
7	Marketing information products and services seldom help in the use of library resources	6 (6.66 %)	4 (4.44 %)	2 (2.22 %)	33 (36.6 6%)	45 (50%)
8	More staff and finance is needed to adopt marketing in libraries	28 (31.1 1%)	26 (28.8 8%)	6 (6.66 %)	20 (22.2 2%)	10 (11.11 %)

Key: SA: Strongly disagree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, DA: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

Attitude towards marketing

The study found that the information professionals had a positive attitude towards marketing in libraries. Table-5 shows respondents agreement with various statements. A large majority, more than 70% of the study participants, agreed or

strongly agreed that every library must have a mission statement. The mission statement needs to be measured periodically after taking the feedback of the customers so that to achieve the objective of the service effectively. Similarly, about 88% of the respondents were of the opinion that a good marketing program rests on a strong determination and teamwork. The respondent had also a positive response to the statement that “libraries should strictly examine their internal and external settings to make effective and timely decisions”. The respondents had no negative attitude towards the statement “marketing in libraries is as essential as classification and cataloguing”. This showed that information professionals considered marketing of information products and services as essential as classification and cataloguing. Most of the information professionals under study either agreed or strongly agreed that an experienced staff member should be made in-charge of the marketing activities. This will certainly help libraries to market their products and services effectively and efficiently. A large majority, more than 82%, of the information professionals opined that marketing programs of the libraries should be able to anticipate any change in the information resources and services. Similarly, almost all the study population agreed that customers’ feedback is a must to assess and examine the value of information resources and services.

Table-5, attitude towards marketing (n=90)

S. No.	Statement	SA	A	N	DA	SD
1	Libraries must have mission statement	50 (55.55%)	18 (20%)	1 (1%)	13 (14.44%)	8 (8.88%)
2	A good marketing program rests on a strong determination and teamwork	70 (77.77%)	10 (11.11%)	1 (1.11%)	5 (5.55%)	4 (4.44%)
3	Libraries should strictly examine their internal and external settings to make decision	56 (62.22%)	30 (33.33%)	00	2 (2.22%)	2 (2.22%)

4	Marketing in libraries is as essential as classification and cataloguing	40 (44.4 4%)	25 (27.77 %)	5 (5.55%)	15 (16.66%)	5 (5.55 %)
5	An experienced staff member should be made in-charge of the marketing activities	52 (57.7 7%)	26 (28.88 %)	3 (3.33%)	9 (10%)	00
6	Mission statement should be regularly measured considering the readers feedback	38 (42.2 2%)	32 (35.55 %)	1 (1.11%)	10 (11.11%)	9 (10%)
7	Marketing programs should be able to anticipate any change in the information resources and services	36 (40%)	38 (42.22 %)	00	10 (11.11%)	6 (6.66 %)
8	Libraries should take customers feedback for examining the quality of their resources and services	70 (77.7 7%)	18 (20%)	1 (1.11%)	1 (1.11%)	00

Key: SA: Strongly disagree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, DA: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree

Marketing planning and practices

A separate six items questionnaire was constructed to get feedback of the Chief Librarians/Library Administrators regarding the current marketing planning and practices of their libraries. The questionnaire was mainly administered to the library in-charges or chief librarians only. In response to question number one, eight of the respondents (57.14%) indicated that their libraries regularly allocate budget to market their information products and services while six librarians (42.85%) replied in negative. When asked “has your library designated any staff member to administer and supervise marketing information products and services”, most of the respondents (78.57%) replied in affirmative while 4 (28.57%) of the respondents indicated that their libraries did not designate

any staff member to administer and supervise marketing information products and services. Most of the libraries did not charge fee from their customers for availing the facility of information products and services. The study found that all of the libraries used to inform their customers about the activities taking place in their libraries. Similarly, all the libraries published their annual reports regularly and marketed their information and products online over the internet.

Table-6, marketing planning and practices (n=14)

S. No.	Question statement	Yes	No
1	Is there any budget allocated by your library to market information products and services	8 (57.14%)	6 (42.85%)
2	Has your library designated any staff member to administer and supervise marketing information products and services	10 (78.57%)	4 (28.57%)
3	Is any fee charged from the readers for availing the facility of information products and services	2 (14.28%)	12 (85.71%)
4	Do your library inform the customers about the activities taking place in your library	14 (100%)	00
5	Is annual report of your library issued regularly	14 (100%)	00
6	Do your library market its resources and services online	14 (100%)	00

Problems in marketing information products and services

Table-7 exhibits the problems faced by libraries while marketing their information products and services. Almost all the libraries were short of trained staff. More than 85% of the information professionals opined that marketing of information products and services was not cost effective, there was lack of support and lack of investment from the parent body to carry on the marketing of information products and services smoothly. It is interesting to note that more than 55% of the respondents indicated that their library building was in inconvenient place which could not help in the smooth operation of marketing their information products and services. Similarly, more than 55% of the information professionals indicated that the information market in the country was also poor.

Table-7, Problems faced in marketing information products and services (n=90)

S. No.	Problem	Yes	No
1	Lack of sufficient trained staff	84 (93.33%)	6 (6.66%)
2	Marketing of information products and services is not cost effective	77 (85.55%)	13 (14.44%)
3	Lack of support from the parent body	78 (86.66%)	12 (13.33%)
4	Lack of ICT infrastructure	60 (66.66%)	30 (33.33%)
5	Insufficient investment from the library	78 (86.66%)	12 (13.33%)
6	The place where library is located is inconvenient	40 (44.44%)	50 (55.55%)
7	No or less demand for available information	30 (33.33%)	60 (66.66%)
8	Information market in the country is poor	40 (44.44%)	50 (55.55%)

Discussion:

To promote their products and services, it has been a regular practice in the profit organizations to use marketing strategies. Such strategies are now considered equally relevant to libraries and information centers. There are so many reasons due to which library professionals apply marketing to their products and services. The use of ICTs, budget cuts, users' diverse information needs, competition with the private sector, information explosion and huge amount of literature has made information professionals to adopt marketing in their libraries. It has been observed that the libraries of higher educational institutions such as universities, invest a huge amount of their budget on collection management, information retrieval, storage and dissemination. These resources are usually under-utilized resulting in the wastage of money, energy and resources. Libraries can solve the problem of under-utilization by applying marketing techniques.

The study found that information professionals of university libraries had a positive attitude towards marketing information products and services. It was only lack of relevant skills, knowledge and exposure on the concept of the library

marketing that discourages the librarians from adopting the principles of marketing in their libraries. Kaur and Rani (2008) and Khan & Bhatti (2012) have also reported similar result in their research study. A large majority of the study population were of the opinion that an efficient marketing program in university libraries rests on a strong determination and teamwork. The study revealed that the rapid growth of information and budget cuts have compelled information professionals to adopt marketing strategies in their libraries. ICTs have also contributed greatly towards the adaptation of marketing in libraries.

However, library professionals do not carry out aggressive marketing in their libraries due to the shrinking budgets, rapid growth of information products, least interest of the library authorities in encouraging the marketing of information products and services and unfamiliarity of the customers with information resources and services were the major factors that hinder adopting marketing in libraries. Lamptey (2016) Khan & Bhatti (2012), Lamptey (2016) and Wahid, Rafiq an Soroya (2017) have also reported similar findings and revealed that marketing strategies and techniques are not applied at the desired level by university librarians in Pakistan.

The study revealed that online technology can help greatly to promote marketing. The study showed that it is essential to designate an experienced person to look after the marketing program. Lack of knowledge, lack of support, lack of IT infrastructure, shrinking budget, least interest by the authorities and inconvenient location of the library building were some of the major problems hindering the application of marketing information products and services. Similar findings have also been reported by Khan and Bhatti (2012) who found that lack of infrastructure, compressed library budgets, pre-fabricated library buildings, lack of latest IT equipment and discouraging attitude of authorities were the major factors hindering marketing practices in libraries and information centers. University libraries in the province of KP apply marketing principles poorly in their work. Thus, it is vital to find out and bring forth the problems that affect their marketing

performance. Thus, this study was able to identify various problems encountered by the information professionals of the university libraries of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

University librarians should know that adopting marketing practices are indispensable to survive in the face of ever-increasing competition and a rapidly changing environment. As per the changing needs of library users, libraries and information centers also need to be changed accordingly. It is important to provide and facilitate libraries with modern technologies. The present and future needs of the customer should be identified and planned with a view to satisfying them. The information professionals should do their level best to understand the nature and needs of the customers. Understanding of this new dimension of library and information services, according to Pantange (2013) and Joseph (2012), would support the library in framing suitable plans and programs which would make libraries most operative and sustainable. The principle of marketing is extremely simple and easily workable as the user is the start and end of every activity that take place within the four walls of the library (Pandey, 2016). The major concern of marketing is to make the customer satisfied. Similarly, the whole philosophy and shared values of the library owe the responsibility of satisfying its user. Every staff member of the library has a role to play in rendering optimum satisfaction to the customer. As such the attitude of service providers becomes important.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The success and survival of libraries and information centers depend on bringing the clientele to utilize its products and services. Users possess prime importance in libraries. Without user, a library is just a pile of books. It is therefore essential to let the user know about the existing collection and facilities available in the library. Marketing information products and services is not merely concerned with selling services only, it is also concerned with disseminating knowledge using various tools and platforms. With reference to the findings of this study and the discussion, it can be inferred that the information professionals working in the university

libraries of KP have a positive attitude towards marketing information products. They, no doubt, are aware of the richness of the information and services available in their domain. It is, therefore, imperative on them to sell the information and knowledge to their customers by using various electronic and non-electronic means of marketing. The study established a relationship between the library and marketing which is essential for university libraries as an instrument of achieving their goals. Marketing of information products and services in university libraries can assist to improve library operations. With it, customers get more satisfaction, and the image of the library is boosted as an information providing organization. It is therefore essential that the information professionals must keep the needs and requirement of their clientele in the forefront of their planning.

Keeping in view the findings of this study, following recommendations are put forward in the context of marketing information products and services in the libraries of public universities in Pakistan in general and KP in particular:

1. Top management of university libraries are required to overcome the weaknesses as identified in this study.
2. Modern marketing strategies and techniques should be adopted by the university librarians for the promotion of their information products and services. These may include issuing of printed publications giving details of the essential products and services, product displays, marketing through various social media platforms and the development of library websites for the effective presentation of library resources and services.
3. In today's competitive environment, library professionals should employ various social media platforms to reach to every potential customer in order to communicate the library mission effectively and efficiently.
4. It is recommended that libraries should provide their patrons with tools for accessing social media by developing social media page on library web site. These social media pages and library websites should be updated regularly to create awareness about the

current information products and services offered by the library.

5. Library staff should be made aware of the concepts and principles of modern marketing. This can be done by organizing seminars, conferences, lectures, and refresher courses concerning the subject.
6. Positions related to marketing be created. These positions may be designated as Marketing Assistant/Information Products and Services manager or any other position with management qualification.
7. All libraries should develop an effective mechanism of feedback so that to monitor the effectiveness of the services and products.
8. It is essential to conduct regular surveys of the library clientele to get their feedback regarding the various services provided. This will help to consider various services for their continuity or discontinuity and the introduction of new services.
9. Top management of the universities should provide basic facilities and infrastructure so that to use marketing services to their benefits and their users.
10. The libraries under study must take advantage of the modern information and communication technologies to effectively augment and innovate library services.
11. Marketing information products and services should be made an integral part of the Library and Information Science curriculum both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

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