Application of 4 Ps of Marketing Mix in Library and Information Services at Public Sector University Libraries of Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan

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Abstract

The specific purpose of this research study is to analyze the response of the users towards promotion, Price Place and Product of marketing mix at public sector university libraries of Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan. To achieve the objectives of the study, opinion of the users (officers, faculty members and students, faculty members) of the three universities in Jamshoro were recorded. Those Universities include Mehran University of Engineering and Technology; Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences and University of Sindh. Survey method was used to carry out the study. A total 240 questionnaires were distributed, and response rate was (100%). The data was collected through a physical visit of the three universities. It was revealed that majority of the respondents showed a mixed response towards information services and 4 Ps of marketing in libraries at the three universities. The analyses of four Ps of marketing mix shows that it helps libraries to develop and promote existing and new information resources and services. It is also pointed out that proper place be assigned and a trained library personnel be deputed to provide information/referral services. It was also pointed out that signs, symbols, handouts, library brochures and library tours, guides, demos should be adopted to increase the use of the information services and resources of the libraries under study.

Keywords: *Promotion-University libraries, Price-Place and Product, 4 P's-libraries-Pakistan. Marketing mix-University Libraries*

Introduction

Marketing of information services and products is an important facility offered by many libraries. By adopting this service, libraries can attract more readers to the library, thereby helping in the promotion of libraries and in the satisfaction of their readers. In the present age of information explosion, marketing is deemed by many librarians and information specialists as an integral part of libraries due to the escalating costs of books and other similar library material. Marketing is the study,

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formation, execution as well as mechanism of prudently formulated programmes intended for bringing voluntary exchanges of standards with a particular market for the purpose of achieving organizational goals (Kotler 1995). Institutions like universities and their libraries are supposed to market their resources and services to gain economic support. In order to serve maximum readers, it is essential for modern libraries to market their information resources and services. By anticipating the varying needs of their readers, and by communicating with them, libraries should develop proper policies and plans to present different library services and products in a perceptive way. Information centers and Libraries have only recently realized the prerequisite to publicize their information services and products and bring into the notice of both internal and external users. Library resources and services these days are considered as goods and commodities that can be traded or rented. The existing libraries in higher institutions of educational setups including the degree awarding institutions (DAIs), and universities depend heavily upon their respective organizations for operating costs. In order to become self-sufficient, such libraries are now doing their best to generate finances by selling their products and services to their clients and become profit organizations. Narayana (1991) explained that the existence of the library relies on the other materials, keeping its conception in the mind of the utilizer and allocation of fund. Such an opinion would produce the results of such the effectiveness and quality of the services and having the potential to look for the intentions and needs of the real and sound users along with their satisfaction. However, these objectives can be fulfilled through the instrument of Marketing. According to Vishwa, Shrinivas & Shashikala (1996), they observed that in the present age of information explosion, marketing in libraries has become a necessity, because those who need information may not even be aware of this need.

Literature Review
Rowley, J. E. (1995), explained that the information centers libraries are mainly related with the user's content. The study indicated that the concept of marketing is actually a power which helps an institution towards user satisfaction. It normally includes pin pointing users' needs and ultimately meeting those needs. With the emergence of the concept of marketing in libraries, librarians are no more considered as storekeepers and libraries

as store houses. Libraries are now considered as service oriented organizations. Also study reviewed key elements related to the formation and application of marketing as well as modules of the marketing mix.

Lima, R.C. (1995) viewed that market division stands for the best response to the interests, demands and needs of the various domains. Further, this exposes the different perspectives of the lifecycle of the products, the information products and marketing mix in the information setup and library. In other words. The personnel viewed as an extra element in mixture of the marketing.

Tilson (1994) pointed out that the pricing apparatus as indicated, "What the market would bear?" rather than a straight attachment to expenditure - grounded values. The study found that most of the libraries had framed some kind of the distinguished values in association with sort of usage and user. The public libraries preferred to adopt a free service. Regulatory charges were mainly preferred by academic libraries.

The study of Seetharaman (1996) identified an inclination to services and fee-based knowledge into the different domains of information disseminating organizations and institution. Libraries considered the information as the profitable product and means in this respect. The study identified many marketable information services and products the libraries can offer. It also illustrated that information centers and library would frame the sound strategies of marketing instruments and procedures including the target group and product identification.Rowley (1997) in a study on "marketing infrastructures and facilities of institutional libraries in Ghana" discussed an essentiality of fee-based strategies in assessing future characteristics of marketing information products. The main focus of the study was on e-databases products. The study focused on the components of electronic databases, prices and delivery in marketing plans. Product was explored in the context of its value, consumption, durability, and individuality. The delivery aspect was explored in the context of various channels as CDs, network, and communication. The price aspect was studied in terms of quality, recovery, marginal cost, and free delivery services.

Vaishnav (1997) conducted a study of marketing information products and services at "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University library (BAMUL)", India. Major objectives of the study were to prepare a marketing plan as per the varying needs of information users and to find

out a marketing mix. The study found that the library of BAMUL introduced several information marketing techniques in order to satisfy users' information needs. The study presented comprehensive plan which included development, packaging, pricing, distribution and advertisement of information products and emphasized the university support to implement the plan

Janakiraman, M (1998) conducted a study of marketing mix has emerged as it dominants them marketing discipline. Meanwhile, the institutional and practical motives lead to marketing over the half century. Such the components including place, product, price and up gradation have entirely been exposed in instrumental marketing setups for strategy formulation and planning. Besides to this, as the more than three components –the public, physical sign and strategy that have been suggested like much more supporting components for marketing. In the present study of library and information services these seven elements have been explored. In view of these mixture of components from the users' perspectives as proposed in this respect.

Arachchige, G. J. J (2002) conducted a study to know the marketing approaches of the outstanding institutional libraries in Sri Lanka. The main emphasis of the study was on market potential, service planning and delivery, market segmentation, market mix with focus on 4ps and the problems associated with marketing productive services and knowledge. Moreover, the data acquisition   of 33 special and 20 academic libraries covered in this way. The study indicated that there is a great marketing potential in the special and academic libraries in Sri Lanka. These libraries have significant resources and offer a variety of services with marketing-oriented staff. The study found that special and academic libraries in Sri Lanka, besides vast marketing opportunities, were practicing poor marketing strategies. Both kinds of libraries have the abilities of recovering their costs incurred on the provision of different kinds of services if proper marketing strategies are adopted. The main problems faced by these libraries in term of marketing were identified as untrained staff, insufficient investment and inadequate technological infrastructure.

Kanaujia (2004) in his study about marketing library and information resources and services by Research and Development Libraries in India reported that the library administrators indicated an encouraging

attitude towards marketing their resources and services. The study suggested that user orientation programmes be launched for users' awareness regarding rich resources or services of these libraries. Similarly

Shontz (2004) in his study on the attitude of librarians towards marketing found almost the same results. He suggested that proper awareness programmes should be launched to make the users familiar with the resources and services of libraries.

Harrison, P. J. & Shaw, R. N. (2004) investigated the adoption of the concept of marketing in Victoria, Australia. The analyses were based on the data collected during a series of discussions with the staff of the Victoria Library. The discussions mainly were focused on the personal experiences and perception of library staff towards marketing. The study also included some questions posed to the library staff regarding marketing mix and the impact of marketing strategies. The research found several components which can be helpful in the successful execution of opinions in marketing of university libraries. Kim & Park. (2006) conducted a study in which he developed the assessment of marketing on the basis of reference and information services of the academic libraries of South Korea. The study also examined the value and extent of 7ps of marketing mix. The performance of the 7ps of marketing mix was compared among different types of libraries, explaining the marketing strategies in South Korea. The study was based on a questionnaire response of 197 information centers. The results of such the work indicated that the performance of 7ps marketing mix was excellent particularly in the special libraries while academic libraries ranked next in this respect. Most of the libraries in South Korea provided their information services using both online and offline techniques, telephone was used the most in providing such services. For online services email was utilized more frequently for disseminating information. The study found that the most popular tool used by the libraries for the promotion of their products and services was their home page.

Shafiq Ur Rehman, (2012) carried out the research work on the private university information centers in Pakistan; and viewed that in general, libraries meet the least number of needs of their users. On the other hand, government university libraries were not fulfilling requirements of users, as there is a major dissimilarity in services quality among private and

governmental sector university libraries.

Objectives

  i.   To find out the response of users about the first "P" of the marketing mix, "Product"
 ii.   To know the response of the users about the second "P" of the marketing mix "Price"
iii.   To assess the response of the users about the third "P" of marketing mix "Place"
 iv.   To evaluate the response of users about the fourth "P" of the marketing mix "Promotion"

Methodology

The study is based on the survey technique and a relevant questionnaire employing to Likert Scale initiative with "Strongly Disagree to strongly agree", in order to acquire the data from the target population. The questionnaire was developed keeping in view the earlier studies conducted on national and international levels and personal experience as a library professional about marketing of information centers and services in libraries of universities.

The purpose of the study was to assess the users' response pertaining to the usage of 4 Ps of marketing mix in information centers and services in public sector university libraries of Jamshoro. Therefore, three different types of libraries of universities were selected for the purpose of this study. The analysis of the data was carried out by adopting simple (mean and standard deviation) descriptive analyses technique using (SPSS version 2.0 software).

Data Analysis

Table-1:   *Gender-wise distribution of the respondents* (n=240)

Gender	Freq.	%
Male	153	64
Female	87	36
Total	240	100

Table: 1 shows that Male respondents were 64% and Female 36%. The response showed that majority of respondents was male members/users of the libraries. This is a fact that in all the three universities, majority of

students, faculty and administrative officers are males. However, 36% females is an encouraging figure in a male dominated society.

Table-2:   *Age group of respondents*

Age	Freq.	%
Up to 20 years (16years -20 years)	113	47
21-25 years	44	18
26-30 years	24	10
31-35 years	18	7
36-40 years	22	9
41-45 years	13	6
46-50 years	6	3
Total	240	100

Table: 2. reveals that the majority 47% of respondents belong up-to 20 years (16-20 years) of age group.

- 113 (47%) users belong up to 20 years of age (16-20 years),
- (18%) users belong to 21-25 years,
- (10%) users belong to 26-30 years,
- (7%) users belong to 31-35 years,
- (9 %) users belong to 36-40 years,
- (6%) users belong to 41-45 years,
- (3 %) users belong to 46-50 years.

This shows that teenagers are respondents in the majority 47% (up to 20 years) while 18% come from 21-25 years. Together, this sizeable chunk indicates that youngsters responded to the questionnaire. This implies that students' response was 100 %.
The remaining 10 %, 7 % + 9 % + 6 % + 3 % respondents belong to age group from 31-35 years to 46-50 years. Some of these are faulty members and some are officers of the University. About 10% respondents (age group 26-30 years) could be either senior students or junior faculty.
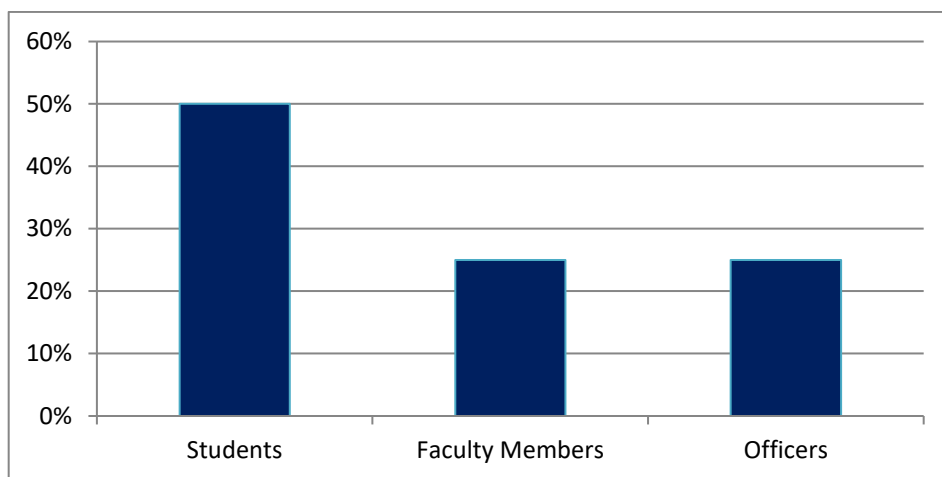

Table-3:   *Status of Respondents' Membership in Library*

Type of Membership	Freq.	%
Students	120	50
Faculty Members	60	25
Officers	60	25
Total	240	100

The response about the status of membership in the three libraries is shown in Table: 3.

This Table reveals that: 50 % students are members of the library, 25 % faculty members are members of the library and 25% officers are members of the library.

Figure-1: **Status of respondents' membership in the library**

The figure 1 gives the data about status of respondents' membership in the library. The graphical representation shows that majority 50 % students are members of libraries while 25% faculty are members of the libraries and 25% administrative officers are members of the libraries.

Table-4:   Response of users about the first P of the marketing mix "product"

Description	Mean	SD
There should be an opportunity for users to participate in the designing process of any new service/product which is targeted at them.	4.25	0.628
The library needs to evaluate its information services and resources/products constantly to determine if they need to be continued, modified or withdrawn.	4.21	0.762
The success of all marketing planning and promotional efforts hinges directly on the quality and excellence of products/services which are designed/delivered.	4.17	1.670
Libraries must constantly introduce new products and services to remain viable.	3.98	1.235
The success of library marketing is based on latest library and valuable resources/products.	3.75	0.963

Scale Values: 1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Undecided 4=Agree 5= Strongly Agree

The above Table shows the response of the users to the statements relating to the first P of marketing mix "Product". There is a mixed response for these statements. The entire response indicated that the majority of the respondents of three universities agree with the statement that "there should be an opportunity for users to contribute in the constructive strategy of any fresh product/service which is targeted at them", followed by the statement, that "the library needs to evaluate its information services and products firmly to find out to continue, modify or withdraw. The questions as asked to check the response of users regarding the first P of the marketing mix, "product", by applying the five-point Likert Scale. The mean and standard deviation has been calculated and shown in Table 4 as,

There should be an opportunity for users to participate in the constructive strategy any fresh product/ service which is targeted at them (Mean=4.21, SD=0.762),

The success of all marketing planning and promotional efforts hinges directly on the quality and excellence of products/services which are designed/delivered (Mean=4.17, SD=1.670),

Information centers must continually introduce new services/ products to remain viable (Mean=3.98, SD=1.235) and

The success of library marketing is based on latest library and valuable resources/products (Mean=3.75, SD=0.963).

Rowley (2003) in the research work pertaining to information marketing has tried to encourage the librarians to adopt marketing principles for their information products and information services. The study posed seven questions relating to marketing, selling, service delivery, branding information services, influencing customers through advertisement and publicity, impact of marketing. The questions were posed with the main aim to address marketing approaches to digital products and traditional services. From the educational point of view, the consideration of these questions supports the understanding of the nature of marketing library products and services. The study suggested some queries for library professionals to be ready to answer.

Table-5 Attitude of users about the second P of the marketing mix "price"

Description	Mean	SD
Charging for information services from the users at only nominal cost will motivate them to use the information resources/products and services repeatedly.	4.78	0.640
User charges prevent misuse of library and information resources/products and services	4.26	0.728
Fees should never become a barrier to use library and information services, everyone deserves equal, unrestricted access to information.	3.92	0.951
The economics of new technologies has made it difficult for libraries to offer services free of cost.	3.82	1.251
The information services can be provided on request by charging nominal fees.	3.67	0.956

Table-5 indicates the response of the users to the descriptions pertaining to the second P of marketing mix "Price". There is a mixed response for these statements. The entire response shows that majority of the users of three universities agree with the statement that "Charging for information services from the users with nominal cost will motivate them to use the services and resources/products repeatedly." followed by the statement

that "User charges prevent misuse of library services and resources/products".

The response about the attitude of users pertaining to the second P of the marketing mix, "price" has been calculated and shown in Table 5 as,

Charging for information services from the users at only nominal cost will motivate them to use the information resources/products and services repeatedly (Mean=4.78, SD=0.640),

User charges prevent misuse of library and information resources/products and services (Mean=4.26, SD=0.728),

Fees should never become a barrier to use library and information services everyone deserves equal, unrestricted access to information (Mean=3.92, SD=0.951),

The economics of advanced technologies framed it difficult for information centers to provide services without the expenditure (Mean=3.82, SD=1.251) and

The information services can be provided on request by charging nominal fees (Mean=3.67, SD=0.956).

Table-6: Attitude about the third P of the marketing mix "place"

Description	Mean	SD
A proper place for a particular service be assigned and a trained library personnel be deputed to provide users information/ referral services	4.81	0.665
Information explosion and development of significant new technologies are creating a strong demand for innovation in the channels of distribution.	4.78	0.735
A separate library's own website be maintained to display list of new arrivals and other library information services	4.69	1.589
If access to library materials and services is inconvenient or presents emotional problem to the users, the usage will be reduced considerably.	3.78	0.873
Advances in information technology have raised the users' expectations of information provision in terms of both quality of service and speed of delivery.	3.69	1.039

The above Table illustrated the response of users to the statements pertaining to the third P of marketing mix "Place", the highest mean value points out that there is a mixed response for such the descriptions. The

entire response points out that majority of the respondents of three universities agree with the statement that "Proper place for particular services may be assigned and trained library personnel be deputed to provide users information services, followed by the statement that "Information explosion and development of significant new technologies are creating a strong demand for innovation in the channels of distribution".

The data reveals in Table 6 for the calculation of attitude about the third P of the marketing mix, "place" as:

A proper place for a particular service be assigned and trained library personnel be deputed to provide users information/referral services (Mean=4.81, SD=0.665),

Information explosion and development of significant new technologies are creating a strong demand for innovation in the channels of distribution (Mean=4.78, SD=0.735),

A separate library's own website be maintained to display lists of new arrivals and other library information services (Mean=4.69, SD=1.589),

If access to library materials and services is an inopportune or presents emotional matter to the users, the usage would be abridged significantly (Mean=3.78, SD=0.873) and

Advances in information technology have raised the users' expectations of information provision in terms of both quality of service and speed of delivery (Mean=3.69, SD=1. 039).

Yanovskii (1996) in his study pointed out and illustrated how marketing strategies can be applied to analyze market situations, enhance the advanced information services and motivate the requirement.

Table 7:   *Attitude about the fourth P of the marketing mix "promotion"*

Description	Mean	SD
Signs, symbols, handouts and library brochures, library tours, guides, demos help to increase the use of library and information services.	4.52	0.929
Both publicity and personal contact will create awareness among the users about the new and existing information products and services.	4.35	1.570

User surveys and personal interviews be conducted periodically.	4.25	1.042
It is necessary to inform the users about the utility and benefits of information products/services of the library, when their usage is minimized or completely missing.	3.81	0.963
Conducting user orientation programme is an important activity of a library for the promotion of its products/services.	3.65	1.023

The above Table indicates the response of the users to the descriptions pertaining to the Fourth P of marketing mix "Promotion". There is a mixed response for such the explanations, the entire response resulted that majority of the respondents agree with the statement that "Signs, symbols, handouts, library brochures library tours, guides and demos help to enhance the application of library and information services.", followed by the statement "Both publicity and personal contact will create awareness among the users about the new and existing information products/services".

The analysis about the attitude for fourth P of the marketing mix "promotion" reveals in Table-7 as:

Signs, symbols, handouts and library brochures, library tours, guides, demos help to enhance the usage of library and information services (Mean=4.52, SD=0.929),

Both personal and publicity relationship would develop conscience among the users about the fresh and current information products and services (Mean=4.35, SD=1.57),

User surveys and personal interviews be conducted periodically (Mean=4.25, SD=1.042), such information is necessary for users to utilize and gain the benefits of products/services of the library, when their usage is minimized or completely missing. (Mean=3.81, SD=0.963),

Conducting user-orientation programme is an important activity of a library for the promotion of its products/services (Mean=4.69, SD=1.023).

Findings of the Study

The study revealed response of users of three universities pertaining to the first P of the marketing mix "product" it was indicated that "there should be an opportunity for users to participate in the designing process of any new product/service which is targeted at them", followed by the statement,

that "the library needs to evaluate its information products/services constantly to determine if they need to be continued, modified or withdrawn".

The study also revealed response of users of three universities about the second P of the marketing mix "price" it was indicated from the response that "charging for information services from the users at a nominal fee will motivate them to use the resources/products repeatedly.", followed by the statement that user charges prevent misuse of library resources/products and services.

The study revealed the response of users of three university libraries pertaining to the third P of the marketing mix "place". It was indicated that "proper central/convenient place for the services be assigned and trained library personnel be deputed to provide users information resources and services", followed by the statement that "information explosion and development of significant new technologies are creating a strong demand for innovation in the channels of distribution"

The study further revealed the response of users of three university libraries regarding the fourth P of the marketing mix "promotion". It was indicated that "signs, symbols, handouts, library brochures, library guides, posters and new arrival lists help to increase the use of library and information services.", followed by the statement "both personal and publicity contact would develop the conscience among the users about the current and advanced information services/ products".

Recommendations

The result of the research study suggested for the marketing practices for refining the image of library and information services in the libraries of the universities. There should be library at each university that should apply the marketing principles for library as well as information products and it means. However, new batch of the students are enrolled at the universities at every year and they are not well- known with the present system of the information centers. Thus, the accountability of information centers is to construct the strategies to upgrade the marketing services/products of libraries at the initiative step of the academic times and there should strictly be tried and adopted with respect to the strategies. Each student of every institution has to contact with library staff and to know the process and usage as well the facilities being provided in the

libraries especially products and services of the libraries. Each university library should have a marketing strategy for its services and products with the objectives to serve the parental institute.

Users should be engaged in the constructive strategy of fresh services/products that are targeted for such the research work. Constant user surveys should be carried out to determine whether a product/services should be continued/modified or withdrawn. Prompt response on the quality of services is an important for making the necessary adjustments to cover the demands.

Libraries should regularly improve and maintain the quality and range of its products/services/resources and match to such the demands of users. As need to ponder over the expenditure matter; charges and services/products should be introduced on no-profit/no-loss basis.

The successful plans and efforts should be followed for payment of the online services including, CD-ROM, DVD, SDI (selective dissemination of information), CAS (current awareness service), abstracting, indexing, e-mail, internet browsing as the users already pay for photocopying services. Marketing efforts including the personal and publicity contact programs and user-orientation programs, should be frequently conducted to develop the awareness among the users for the resources/products/services of the library.

Internet availability at each library should design its web page/ own homepage and employ it as a strategic instrument to develop the awareness, advertise services and afresh knowledgeable resources/products, and also dispense brochures and distribute digital products and services to the target groups.

Libraries should carry out seminars, workshops, library tours to inform and motivate the users about services and products of the library.

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