# Library Marketing and User Satisfaction in Higher Institution

## Norsyafiqah Nasokha and Che Zainab Abdullah

Faculty of Information Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA,
UiTM Selangor, Malaysia

**Abstract**

Library marketing strategy is seen as the important activity that should be taken into consideration by the library to improve its image and visibility. To have effective library marketing to library users, it is essential for the library to offer high quality of product, price, place and promotion. This study presents a perception on library marketing (product, promotion, and staff) and its relationships with user satisfaction. Questionnaires were distributed to 183 random library users who are using the academic library services. The analyses were undertaken using SPSS. Descriptive findings showed moderate perceptions in three variables measured where the mean value was in the range 3.61 to 4.10 on a 5-point Likert. Besides that the results also indicates a positive and moderate relationship between staff, product, promotion, and user satisfaction. The finding of the study is useful for the library to realise that marketing strategies applied will contribute to the user satisfaction. Library should improve their marketing strategies to make them still relevant in this era.

**Keywords**: Library Marketing; Marketing Strategy; User Satisfaction

## 1. Introduction

The existence of the library for over centuries ago gives plenty of impacts, especially in helping their user. Due to the rapid technological development, it actually gives impact to the library. Library need to compete with the other free web access of information like the search engine (Google & Yahoo) where they have very simple and user-friendly interfaces if we notice (Garoufallou, Zafeiriou, Siatri, & Balampanidou, 2013). Therefore, due to high competitions in the information field, we could notice the function of the library is threatened. If before this without technologies, libraries are among the place preferably by users to obtain the information but now there are loads of mediums or platforms outside there. So, librarian as the information professional who drives this library should take initiative to promote the library compatible with the technologies that we have today. Marketing strategy is one of the ways that expected may improve the image and the existence of the library to attract extra users utilize library materials as well as their services (Xia, 2009).

Marketing is not a new library activity (Garoufallou, Siatri, Zafeiriou, & Balampanidou, 2013) where it is actually could assist librarian in order to keep library survive with the

increasing numbers of competition in the information environment (Rowley, 1995). Thus, if this library marketing being applied appropriately, indirectly it could give a great contribution to the library and information services.  Taiwo, Ayandare, & Olusola (2015) opined that the main goal of the library is of course to meet user satisfaction regarding of library performance. Thus, with the availability of the library marketing actually will help to achieve the goal. One of the ways to evaluate whether the marketing strategy applied by the library is meeting the standard, a survey should be conducted (Garaofallou, Siatri, Zafeiriou & Balampanidou, 2013) to get the user's feedback. This paper attempts to describe the results of the study which aims to investigate the perception of users towards the effectiveness of library marketing applied by the academic library and its relationship with user satisfaction. The aim of this paper is  to determine the perception on library marketing (product, promotion, and staff) and user satisfaction. We also want to examine the relationship between library marketing (product, promotion, and staff) and user satisfaction.

## 2. Literature Review
### 2.1 Library Marketing
The concept of library marketing was first introduced by Kotler & Levy in 1969 (Garaofallou, Siatri, Zafeiriou, & Balampanidou, 2013; Chandratre & Chandrate, 2015). It was through the phase long time ago where at that time researcher notice the important in implementing a marketing strategy for the library to increase user satisfaction. The library is one of the non-profit organizations where the intention is not to sell the goods but more to provide services to their users. Garaofallou, Siatri, Zafeiriou & Balampanidou (2013) state that the concept of "selling" is still a taboo to many of the librarian outside there. Librarians do not understand the real concept of marketing for the library because for them the term "marketing" is to sell products. Actually the purpose of marketing the library is of course to attract the users and at the same time maximize the use of the library services. There is no point if advanced services provided but no user interested to use. Then by implementing a marketing strategy indirectly will contribute towards the achievement of the library objectives (Arachchige, 2002; ACRL & Reynolds, 2003)

### 2.2 Product
In the library, the role of the product is very high in line with the core business of the library in serving the information to the users. Library should consider better product because it will give benefits to the user in fulfilling their needs and want. Arachchige (2002), states that the usefulness of library product in giving response especially for user priorities in terms of commercial intelligence, educational, leisure, recreational or social information. Based on the statement it shows the position of library product is high to contribute to the production of high-minded communities.

The different researcher will have different opinions on the elements break down under the product. A product in general believed as anything that can be offered by the marketer in order to satisfy a want or need of users. Chandraiah (2009) opined that the product consists of physical goods, services, persons, places, organization and ideas. As a library which serves the users, the quality products should be prioritized to meet the satisfaction.

## 2.3 Promotion

It is becoming useless while you have complete resources, better services, and great staff but user does not recognize about that. As supported by Sheila (1982), the function of the library as a medium for serving the information is fail once library cannot communicate to the user their potential value (as cited in Arachchige, 2002). Konya (2013) called promotion as marketing communication. This communication is important to the library especially to make library well known. Besides that it also becomes a way to approach the user to make them aware the value of the library.

Generally promotion is more to the way in which the library advertises their services and the methods-tools used to inform the public. Examples of the promotion used by the library are such public relations, advertising, publicity and personal communication. Then for the methods-tools such as brochures, leaflets, posters, newsletters, user-oriented seminars, book presentations or exhibitions, announcements on press and social media (Facebook, Twitter, Blogs and others) (Ewers & Austen, 2004; Jose & Bhat, 2007).

## 2.4 Staff

In the marketing mix, staff or can be known as people is one of the important elements for the development of strategies in the library. Therefore the term "internal marketing" has been introduced to be included in the library's marketing strategies which involving the entire staff (Basantra & Sanjay, 2008). As mentioned by Coote (1994), in order to run the marketing operation in the library, there is no expert staff in the marketing is required because library is not like the other organization which the purpose is to sells the goods. However in the library certain skills and attributes are required from the staff for marketing the library and its information products and services. The skills and attitude that necessary should have for the entire staff like their ability to gather and interpret information for the user, good communication skill, and high commitment towards promoting the library. Then with all these skills and attitude indirectly will increase the library marketing and attract more users to use the library products and services.

## 2.5 User Satisfaction

The main goal each of the libraries that exists in this world is of course to find user satisfaction. As mentioned by Dizon (2010), the satisfaction of the user is described by the feelings come out from the user's interaction with something which include brands, products, services as well as towards organization that produce them. Satisfaction is intrapersonal response where the product or service provided to the user could fulfill their feelings. In the simple way user satisfaction can be described as the good feeling that is felt by the users when use something for instance in term of library product or services. In the context of this study, the satisfaction of the user is measured through the library performance.

Flaten (2006) in his book did mention about the objective of the marketing is to maximize the level of satisfaction for each of the library users. The success of the library could be seen when they are able to fulfill the current and future requirements of the users. Due to the high competition in the information field, the satisfaction of the user could be maintained by implementing high-quality library marketing strategy.

## 3. Methodology

A survey research method was adopted to address the research questions. In this study, a set of questionnaire was personally distributed to random users in one academic

library in Malaysia. The researcher went to the academic library to collect the data from respondents. Out of 377 sampling, there were only 183, which 48.5 percent questionnaires returned back to the researcher. It was involving students, researcher, lecturer, staff and others.

Likert-scale was used to evaluate the perception of user on the library marketing and perception on satisfaction. The range of scale was starting from scale one (strongly disagree) until five (strongly agree). Data analysis is analyzed by generating the value of raw data. Since, this study used the questionnaire as the instrument to collect the data, the process of analyzing will use the appropriate software, which is the most common one, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22.

## 4. Results And Discussions
### 4.1 Reliability Analysis

The reliability test was performed on each dimension to determine their internal consistency, hence their reliability.  The number of items for each variable ranges from 3 to 12 (Table 1). The Cronbach's alpha reliability test results show the value for product (0.895), promotion (0.778), staff (0.776) and user satisfaction (0.872). According to all of the value, it is clearly shown that the values were more than 0.7 and automatically proves that all the data instrument of this study is trustworthy and reliable as well. Then it can be used for further analysis.

Table 1.
Reliability Test Results

|   | Variables | Cronbach alpha | Number of items |
|---|-----------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Product | 0.895 | 12 |
| 2 | Promotion | 0.778 | 6 |
| 3 | Staff | 0.776 | 3 |
| 5 | User satisfaction | 0.872 | 8 |

## 4.2 Profile of the Respondents

This survey was participated by 183 respondents. Out of 183, 54 (29.5%) of respondents were male. Meanwhile 129 (70.5%) of respondents were female. More than half (63.9%) of the respondents which is 117 were in the range of age from 21 until 25 years old. It was followed by 22 respondents (12%) for 26 until 30 years old, 16 respondents (8.7%) for both 16 until 20 years old and 31 until 35 years old, 8 respondents (4.4%) for 36 until 40 years old, and 4 respondents (2.2%) for 41 years old and above. The major portion of the sample was made up of students with 176 or 96.2 per cent. The other positions were represented by less than five per cent of the samples: researcher (4 or 2.2%), lecturer (1 or 0.5%), staff (1 or 0.5%) and others (1 or 0.5%).

4.3 Perception On Library Marketing And User Satisfaction

The level of perception is measured by the aggregated mean of the 5-point Likert scale items. Table 2 shows the perception on library marketing and user satisfaction on four dimensions. They perceived themselves relatively high on staff (mean = 4.10), and moderately high for user satisfaction (mean = 3.91), product (mean = 3.77), and promotion (mean = 3.61).

Table 2.
Ranking of the Level of Perception

| Dimension | Mean Score | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|
| Staff | 4.10 | 0.703 |
| User satisfaction | 3.91 | 0.831 |
| Product | 3.77 | 0.847 |
| Promotion | 3.61 | 0.923 |

### 4.3.1 Perception On Product

Product here means the collections that the library offered to their users. The perception of the respondents on library product was moderate whereby the overall mean score was 3.77 (Table 4.4.1). In particular, they were agreed to those statements where *the collections offered are available in the various sources* (mean = 3.93), *the collections offered are complete* (mean = 3.74) and *the collections offered are up-to-date* (mean = 3.66).

Table 3.
Result of Means Scores by Product

| | Statement | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The collections offered are complete | 3.74 | 0.892 |
| 2 | The collections offered are up-to-date | 3.66 | 0.835 |
| 3 | The collections offered are available in various sources | 3.93 | 0.816 |
| | **Overall** | 3.77 | 0.847 |

### 4.3.2 Perception on Promotion

The perception on promotion from the respondents was moderate whereby the overall mean score was 3.61 (Table 4.4.4). The respondents were highly agreed *library promote products and services through the library website* (mean = 4.02). The rest still agreed where *library promote products and services through the exhibition* (mean = 3.69), *library promote products and services through social media* (mean = 3.49) and *library promote products and services through email* (mean = 3.25).

Table 4.
Result of Means Scores by Promotion

| | Statement | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Library promote products and services through exhibition | 3.69 | 0.862 |
| 2 | Library promote products and services through library website | 4.02 | 0.832 |
| 3 | Library promote products and services through social media | 3.49 | 0.971 |
| 4 | Library promote products and services through email | 3.25 | 1.028 |
| | **Overall** | 3.61 | 0.923 |

### 4.3.3 Perception on Staff

The perception of respondents towards staff was high and they were confident on the characteristic of staff. This is indicated by the overall mean score of 4.10 in Table 4.4.6. In particular, they agreed that librarian is *helpful* (mean = 4.22), *knowledgeable* (mean = 4.07), and *approachable* (4.01).

Table 5.
Result of Means Scores by Staff

|   | Statement | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Librarian is knowledgeable | 4.07 | 0.655 |
| 2 | Librarian is helpful | 4.22 | 0.692 |
| 3 | Librarian is approachable | 4.01 | 0.763 |
|   | **Overall** | 4.10 | 0.703 |

**4.3.4 Perception On User Satisfaction**

　　The user satisfaction on the library performance from the respondents was moderate whereby the overall mean score was 3.91 (Table 4.4.9). The respondents were highly satisfied with *the condition of library collections* (mean = 4.03). However respondents still were satisfied with the *accessibility of library services and products* (mean = 3.99), *usefulness of library collection* (mean = 3.98), *friendliness of reference staff* (mean = 3.96), *readiness of librarians to respond to user* (mean = 3.92), *use of internet in accessing library collections* (mean = 3.87), *fast service provided* (mean = 3.79), and *service charge by the library* (mean = 3.77).

Table 6.
Result of Means Scores by User Satisfaction

|   | Statement | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I am satisfied with the accessibility of library services and products | 3.99 | 0.754 |
| 2 | I am satisfied with the fast services provided | 3.79 | 0.792 |
| 3 | I am satisfied with the usefulness of library collections | 3.98 | 0.781 |
| 4 | I am satisfied with the condition of library collections | 4.03 | 0.806 |
| 5 | I am satisfied with the use of internet in accessing library collections | 3.87 | 1.049 |
| 6 | I am satisfied with the readiness of librarians to respond to the user | 3.92 | 0.795 |
| 7 | I am satisfied with the friendliness of reference staff | 3.96 | 0.787 |
| 8 | I am satisfied with the service charge by the library | 3.77 | 0.891 |
|   | **Overall** | 3.91 | 0.831 |

**4.4 Relationships Between Library Marketing And User Satisfaction**

　　Table 7 shows the correlation between the three dimensions of library marketing (product, promotion, and staff) and user satisfaction. The following correlations are significant. User satisfaction is positively and moderately correlated with staff ($r=0.640$; $p<0.01$), product ($r=0.588$; $p<0.01$), and promotion ($r=0.518$; $p<0.01$).

Table 7.
Correlations between Library Marketing and User Satisfaction

|  | PRO | PROM | STAFF | USESATIS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Product | 1 |  |  |  |
| Promotion | .386** | 1 |  |  |

| Staff | .493** | .404** | 1 | |
| UserSatisfaction | .588** | .518** | .640** | 1 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## 5. Discussions And Conclusion

The finding reveals respondents' perceptions are relatively high on staff and moderately high on user satisfaction, product, and promotion. Staff takes high responsibility in marketing the library especially front liner staff. That is because user usually meets them in order to raise any queries or to get advice on how to use the library or where to obtain the materials. As front liner staff they need to show that they are approachable and very helpful. It is one of the reasons why users unpleasant to use the library because of unfriendly staff. Then for product, as an academic library, should take into consideration the collection of materials because the majority of their users are students and of course they need latest collection and available in various sources such as in printed and electronic format in helping them to complete the task. Meanwhile promotion in this study refers to any of the mechanisms used by the library in order to make their user know about what actually they have. It includes collection, service, facilities, and so on. As part of promotion approach, this academic library has used library website and social media like Facebook and Twitter in line and accordance with the technology nowadays. The perception on user satisfaction then could be measured through library performance. Generally, marketing strategy applied by the library will produce better performance. Based on this performance user could see whether it achieves their expectation or not. Majority of the academic library users are students and researchers. So that, it is important for the library to perform and shows the best ways to serve user's leaning and research needs.

The study also indicates a positive and moderately correlated between staff and user satisfaction, product and user satisfaction, and promotion and user satisfaction. One of the reasons why user avoids to use the library was because of the staff is not user-friendly. Staff should change their character and shows that they are among professional one. They should give a warm welcoming and entertain the user politely. As this staff will become reference person, they need to always ready in giving services and knowledge that they have in finding the information. With the availability of those characteristic, indirectly will influence the user satisfaction. That is because users will feel that they are appreciated when receiving high-quality services from the staff. As supported by Singh (2009), library should measure their market orientation and part of it is staff attitudes. Then for product, it actually plays a role in library marketing whereby it is something offered to user and product here means the collections. Once the collections are completely and always available when user wants to use it, indirectly it will lead to the satisfaction. It is agreed by Patrick, Aghojare & Ferdinand (2015) where the extent to which user satisfied was depending on the size and collection offered by the library. Besides that, the satisfaction of user also could be seen when library use the appropriate medium to inform the user what actually library has and what was done by the library in helping users find the information. The effectiveness in delivering the methods of promotion towards the library to some extent could increase the user satisfaction. It can be measured when the user knows any recent product, service and activities conducted by the library. Taiwo, Ayandare, & Olusola (2015) state that users are important in the library operation, therefore to maintain user satisfaction library should provide better resources and services.

In line with the mission of the Ministry of Education, "To sustain the higher education ecosystem in order to develop and enhance individual potential and fulfill the nation's aspiration", as an academic library they should assist the ministry to achieve their target by providing information and indirectly could produce more intellectual people. However it has been discussed frequently, the role of the library has threatened due to the existence of other channel in distributing information. Search engine like Google and Yahoo can be said the most obvious competitors. In order to compete with those entire channels and make the library as the main center of information, they should think forward maybe for ten or twenty years later it is library still relevant in Malaysia. It is marketing strategies applied by the library is strong enough to attract users to use the library as a center of information and is the role of the library in assisting education can be accepted.

As this study was contributes the finding on user perception towards their marketing strategy, library should take it and improve any weaknesses found. Then for the future study, it is recommended for another researcher to study in depth in the library marketing. The scope can be changed from library user to the management of the library. Researcher can evaluate the librarian perception towards their marketing strategy. It can be the continuation process where the results could be compared between library user and librarian. Besides that it is also suggested to conduct the study to the other type of library such as public library or special library and see the difference perception in different environments.

## References
ACRL, & Reynolds, A. B. (2003). Strategic marketing for academic and research libraries: Psrticipant manual. Retrieved from http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/issues/marketing/ParticipantManual.pdf

Arachchige, J. J. G. (2002). An approach to marketing in special and academic libraries of Sri Lanka: A survey with emphasis on services provided to the clientele. Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10760/6731

Basanta, K. D., & Sanjay, K. K. (2008). Marketing of library and information services in global era: A current approach. *Webology, 5*(2). Retrieved from http://www.webology.org/2008/v5n2/a56.html

Chandraiah, I. C. (2009). *Introduction to marketing of library and information services.* Delhi: Manglam Publications.

Chandratre, S. V., & Chandratre, M. S. (2015). Marketing of library and information services. *Journal of Commerce & Management Thought, 6*(1), 162-175. doi: 10.5958/0976-478x.2015.000011.7

Coote, H. (1994). *How to market your library service effectively: And enjoy it in the process!.* London: Aslib.

Dizon, F. R. (2010). Customer satisfaction, ROI, and library marketing and promotions: The

Rizal Library experience. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281642246_Customer_Satisfaction_ROI_ and_Library_Marketing_and_Promotions_The_Rizal_Library_Experience

Flaten, T. K. (2006). Management, marketing and promotion of library services based on statistic, analyses and evaluation. Retrieved from https://books.google.com.my/books?id=6t3-QVZBA_EC&pg=PA217&lpg=PA217&dq=user+satisfaction+on+library+marketing&source=bl&ots=x40Mxt_SDw&sig=EtsVs5D2q5MrUVhJsvIzX2ZZjbI&hl=ms&sa=X&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=user%20satisfaction%20on%20library%20marketing&f=false

Garoufallou, E., Siatri, R., Zafeiriou, G., & Balampanidou, E. (2013). The use of marketing concepts in library services: A literature review. *Library review, 62*(4/5), 312-334. doi: 10.1108/LR-06-2012-0061

Garoufallou, E., Zafeiriou, G., Siatri, R., & Balampanidou, E. (2013). Marketing applications in Greek academic library services. *Library Management, 34*(8/9), 632-649. doi: 10.1108/LM-03-2012-0012

Konya, U. (2013). Marketing communication in libraries: Observations of German research libraries. *Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries (QQMC), 2*, 149-156.

Patrick, I. O., Aghojare, B., & Ferdinand, O. A. (2015). Assess users' satisfaction on academic library performance: A study. *International Journal of Academic Research and Reflection, 3*(5), 67-77. Retrieved from http://www.idpublications.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/ASSESS-USERS%E2%80%99-SATISFACTION-ON-ACADEMIC-LIBRARY-PERFORMANCE-A-STUDY.pdf

Rowley, J. E. (1995). From storekeeper to salesman: Implementing the marketing concept in libraries*. Library Review, 44*(1), 24-35. doi: 10.1108/00242539510076989

Singh, R. (2009). Does your library have a marketing culture? Implications for service providers.
*Library Management, 30*(3), 117-137. doi: 10.1108/01435120910937302

Taiwo, I., Ayandare, I., & Olusola, S. (2015). Products and Services in Academic Libraries, *3*(2), 133–145. doi: 10.15640/jlis.v3n2a8

Xia, Z. D. (2009). Marketing library services through Facebook groups. *Library Management, 30*(6/7), 469-478. doi: 10.1108/01435120910982159