Marketing Strategies in University Libraries of North-Western India in Present Era: A Study of Viewpoints of Post Graduates and Research Scholars

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The purpose of the research paper is to examine the viewpoints of the students belonging to different categories viz. research scholars and post graduates regarding the implementation of various marketing techniques for library resources and services. The traditional marketing tools and those based on Web, Web 2.0 have been taken into considerations. The research study is based on survey method governed by structured questionnaire intended for the users. The data was collected from research scholars and post graduates belonging to eight universities of North Western India. It was then analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software to obtain results. The findings revealed that there were significant differences in the view points of the two categories of users with most of the marketing techniques. It was found that there is no significant difference in few marketing tools amongst the two categories of the students with regard to the opinion in adopting those techniques.

Keywords: *Marketing tools, Library promotional tool, User opinion; User viewpoint, Web 2.0 technologies, Web based marketing, University libraries.*

0 INTRODUCTION

In this ICT era, many libraries have adopted different information storage, processing and retrieval systems to fulfill their user information

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needs. To help meet these information needs of its patrons, libraries must have some efficient and effective strategic plan to harness the technological environment in which the library professionals work and potential users seek information. Hence, it becomes very important for the library professionals to drive the libraries to promote their resources and services compatible with technologies in this era of new emerging technologies (Rahoo and others, 2018)[1]. Here, the marketing tools play a significant role for the users (Xia,2009)[2]. If appropriate marketing tools are applied in the library, it would contribute to a wide usage of its resources and services. The implementation of Web 2.0 tools would certainly facilitate the librarians to improve their marketing services (Lazor, 2014)[3]. Buriro and others (2018)[4]found the deep roots in society as a set of technologies to enhance the changing environment of the libraries and its users. Through these Web tools, it becomes easy for library professionals to reach its users and take feedback regarding the use of these tools for making them aware of library resources and services (Kaur,2009)[5]. Thus, adoption of marketing tools to achieve the library objective must be studied by getting users' feedback (Garaofallou*et al*, 2013)[6]. One such study conducted by Buriro and others(2018)[4]at South Carolina State Library, reported that a great majority of its users opined that Web 2.0 tools play pivotal role in marketing library resources and services. In another study done by Busari and others (2015)[7], user satisfaction was also perceived as a factor enhancing library performance.

The present study, which is part of a PhD degree, aims at studying the students' (post graduates and research scholars) view points taking into consideration their academic attainment, regarding the implementation of marketing tools which could be used for making the users familiar with library resources and services in the rapidly changing technological world. The study was undertaken on university libraries of North-Western India to explore the application of Web 2.0 technologies along with other tools and techniques for marketing of the library.

1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A study was conducted by Gardner (2008)[8] on 69 academic library websites to find out how the libraries marketed their library resources and services among its faculty members. It was found that the web pages of the

faculty members were most popular and accepted to market the library services for teaching and research. Hendrix and others (2009)[9] conducted a study on 70 librarians to know the use of Facebook. It was found that a great majority of the library professionals used social networking sites to promote its library resources and services. In the study done by Goh and Liew, (2009)[10] it was found that many users adopted mobile alert services which is a mobile application marketing technique. It was well accepted and extremely popular amongst the users.

The related studies conducted during the past on marketing strategies along with users' perception are discussed in this paragraph. Bartelstein and Ryan (2013)[11] in their study involved users as an active participant in knowing about their opinion regarding library marketing tools and techniques. They engaged the users in incorporating their opinions to raise awareness amongst themselves about library resources and services. Social media was widely accepted amongst users as a marketing strategy. Umeozor (2013)[12] in his study observed similar trend from the users getting benefited due to the marketing strategy adopted by the library. User education as a marketing strategy had the most positive and highest response from users, followed by compulsory library instruction course and training on information search and retrieval. The least response received from the users was individual instructions at reference desk. Jones and Harvey(2016)[13] in their research study also made efforts to promote the services and connect to potential users of further education college libraries of United Kingdom through social media platforms. Findings revealed that the libraries were in their infancy and still struggling to cater to the needs of users through social media. It was recommended that users' needs survey should be an important part of research and their needs should be central to the marketing strategy. Zhu (2016)[14] surveyed users' perceptions regarding WeChat as a social media marketing tool as he thought that users with different backgrounds and experience would have different viewpoints. The findings revealed that users accepted WeChat as an effective approach to promote library resources and services in order to enhance its usage. In one of the research study by Inyang and Ekpang(2019)[15]that discussed the users' perceptions about marketing of library services, the acceptance of the library services was as follows in decreasing order, users orientation (93.5 per cent), selective discrimination of information (88.8 per cent), translation services (72.03 per cent), reference services (95.6 per cent), exhibitions (35.7 per cent), current awareness services (86.2 per cent), inter library loan (67.4 per cent). The

study recommended training to library professionals in order to strengthen their competencies to benefit the users. Social media marketing was well perceived by the users according to the study done by Pashootanizadeh (2019)[16]. The users opined that the interaction capability is the most important feature as a library social media marketing tool. Data showed that around 80 per cent of users were interested in receiving the information of the library through social media.

The above literature review indicates that most of the studies on marketing of library resources and services seeking users' viewpoints about appropriate promotional tools in the fast changing technological era had been undertaken in different countries. Probably, no such study has been conducted in Universities of North-Western India. Thus, the present study is a timely endeavour to investigate the student's viewpoint towards marketing in libraries to adopt suitable marketing techniques for effective services.

2 OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are formulated:

1. To ascertain the students' viewpoints regarding the implementation of Web 2.0 tools for library marketing in relation to their level of academic level, i.e. research scholars and postgraduates.

2. To investigate the viewpoints of the students for the adoption of Web-based marketing strategies with respect to their user categories.

3. To know the opinions of the two categories of users about the use of traditional marketing tools in the era of new emerging technologies.

3 HYPOTHESIS

In light of the above mentioned objectives, the following hypotheses were framed:

H1 There are significant differences regarding the viewpoints for implementation of Web 2.0 tools in terms of library marketing between post graduates and research scholars.

H2 Significant differences exist between the viewpoints of post graduates and research scholars for adoption of Web based marketing strategies.

H3 Significant differences exist between opinions of two categories of students with regard to use of traditional marketing tools in libraries of present era.

4   SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The study is intended to explore the viewpoint of the users (post graduates and research scholars) regarding the use of Web 2.0, Web and traditional based library marketing strategies which would help them in knowing the library resources and services. This study included eight state universities of North-Western India viz. Jammu University (Jammu), Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak, Panjab University, Chandigarh, Punjabi University, Patiala, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar) and University of Kashmir, Srinagar.

A structured questionnaire based survey was carried out. A pilot study on 25 students of Panjab University, Chandigarh, was conducted before finalizing the questionnaire after essential modifications. The population of the present study was heterogeneous, therefore, stratified random sampling method was used to collect the data from the students. Out of the total population of 57181, there were 43,945 postgraduates and 13,236 research scholars. To give the appropriate representation to every university, at least a sample of 150 users including as a minimum 50 research scholars was planned. But, keeping in mind the non-response rate up to 30.00 per cent, the sample was increased and the questionnaire was administered on 1350 students (around 100 post graduate students and 70 research scholars from each university) of the eight universities under study. Thus, adequate representation was also given to each stratum of the respondents. The data was collected in the year 2019. Total 1189 duly filled questionnaires were received out of which 708 questionnaires were received from post graduates and 481 questionnaires were received from research scholars (Table 1). The data was then analyzed by using SPSS software and cross tables were generated to present the data. Chi square test was applied to ascertain the variations between research scholars and post graduates with respect to their viewpoints in connection to various marketing techniques to promote the library resources and services. A level of statistical significance (p) of less than 0.05 was adopted.

5   DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

51 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ON THE BASIS OF RESPONSES RECEIVED BY THEIR ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT

Out of the 1189 responses received, 708 (59.50 per cent) were post graduates and 481 (40.50 per cent) were research scholars. The data shown in Table 1 indicates that the study comprised 91 post graduates and 60 research scholars from Jammu University (Jammu), 83 post graduates and 66 research scholars from Maharshi Dayanand University (Rohtak), 90 post graduates and 61 research scholars from Panjab University, Chandigarh, 91 post graduates and 56 research scholars from Punjabi University (Patiala), 90 post graduates and 61 research scholars from Kurukshetra University (Kurukshetra), 87 post graduates and 56 research scholars from Himachal Pradesh University (Shimla), 89 post graduates and 61 research scholars from Guru Nanak Dev University (Amritsar) and 87 post graduates and 60 research scholars from University of Kashmir (Srinagar). Overall response rate was 88.07 per cent.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents on the Basis of Responses Received by Their Academic Attainment

Sr. No.	Name of University	Responses received		
		PG	RS	Total
1.	Jammu University, Jammu	91	60	151
2.	Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak	83	66	149
3.	Panjab University, Chandigarh	90	61	151
4.	Punjabi University, Patiala	91	56	147
5.	Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra	90	61	151
6.	Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla	87	56	143
7.	Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar	89	61	150
8.	University of Kashmir, Srinagar	87	60	147
	Total	**708**	**481**	**1189**

Table 2: ViewpointsRegardingWeb 2.0 Marketing Tools and User Category

Marketing Tools	Users' Category	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Chi-square value (X^2)
Mobile applications	PG	392 (55.40)	275 (38.80)	35 (4.90)	5 (0.70)	1 (0.10)	X^2=3.92 df = 4 p = 0.42
	RS	240 (49.90)	191 (39.70)	43 (8.90)	5 (1.00)	2 (0.40)	
Social networking sites(Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, blog, Instagram and LinkedIn)	PG	349 (49.30)	319 (45.10)	30 (4.20)	0 (0)	10 (1.40)	X^2 = 11.54 df = 4 P = 0.02*
	RS	297 (61.70)	164 (34.10)	17 (3.50)	0 (0)	3 (0.60)	
RSS feeds	PG	98 (13.80)	336 (47.50)	236 (33.30)	31 (4.40)	7 (1.00)	X^2=18.63 df = 3 p = 0.00**
	RS	70 (14.60)	264 (54.90)	136 (28.30)	10 (2.10)	1 (0.20)	
Podcast and Vodcast	PG	99 (14.00)	288 (40.70)	267 (37.70)	48 (6.80)	6 (0.80)	X^2=12.56 df = 4 p = 0.01**
	RS	51 (10.60)	189 (39.30)	227 (47.20)	10 (2.10)	4 (0.80)	
Wikis	PG	187 (26.40)	330 (46.60)	156 (22.00)	30 (4.20)	5 (0.70)	X^2=21.90 df = 4 p = 0.00**
	RS	116 (24.10)	242 (50.30)	108 (22.50)	12 (2.50)	3 (0.60)	

Notes: n = 1189, figures in parentheses indicate percentage, PG = Post Graduates, RS = Research Scholars.

5.2 VIEWPOINTS REGARDING WEB 2.0 MARKETING TOOLS AND USER CATEGORY

The respondents were asked to give their viewpoints about Web 2.0 based library marketing tools.The responses ('Strongly agree' and 'Agree') has been clubbed for the purpose of generalization of the results.A majority of post graduates and research scholars agreed that mobile applications would help them know the upcoming news, events and notices, reservation of books, books (issue or return) in account, fine, over dues and re-issue of books.About 95.00 per cent from each category of users, agreed that social networking sites such as Facebook,Twitter, YouTube, blogs and Instagram would be helpful in knowing about the library news, notices, upcoming events, library tour, new subscription to e-resources, new services, online orientation/user education programmes, alerting services, new arrivals, new issues of periodicals received and table of content service. Nearly 62.00 per cent post graduates and about 70.00 per cent research scholars admitted that RSS feeds would be beneficial to make them aware of subscription to new e-resources, new issues of periodicals received, new arrivals, table of contents, events, news and notices. Responding to the question whether podcast and vodcast would provide assistance to them, 54.70 per cent post graduates and 49.90 per cent research scholars agreed that this marketing tool would support the library with respect to user education and information literacy programmes. An attempt was also made to determine the opinion of the respondents whether wikis would help them to know about general information about the library, upcoming news, events and notices, new arrivals and table of contents, almost three-fourth respondents from both group of users agreed that it would be a suitable marketing tool (Table 2).

The analysis in Table 2 indicates that statistically, there are significant differences between users' categories for implementation of Web 2.0 tools like social networking sites, RSS feeds, podcast, vodcast and wikis except mobile applications. Hence, the hypothesis" H1: There are significant differences regarding the viewpoints for implementation of web 2.0 tools in terms of library marketing between post graduates and research scholars" is accepted.

Table3: View points RegardingWeb-based Marketing Tools and User Category

Marketing Tools	Users' Category	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Chi-square value (X^2)
Library website	PG	220 (31.10)	397 (56.10)	87 (12.30)	3 (0.40)	1 (0.10)	X^2 =10.54 df =4 p = 0.03*
	RS	193 (40.10)	247 (51.40)	33 (6.90)	8 (1.70)	0 (0)	
Website integrated with various Web 2.0 tools	PG	189 (26.70)	400 (56.50)	104 (14.70)	8 (1.10)	7 (1.00)	X^2 =21.73 df =4 p =0.00**
	RS	164 (34.10)	229 (47.60)	73 (15.20)	13 (2.70)	2 (0.40)	
SMS alerts	PG	300 (42.40)	311 (43.90)	78 (11.00)	13 (1.80)	6 (0.80)	X^2 =14.86 df =4 p = 0.01**
	RS	206 (42.80)	210 (43.70)	52 (10.80)	11 (2.30)	2 (0.40)	
Web OPAC	PG	247 (34.90)	380 (53.70)	68 (9.60)	12 (1.70)	1 (0.10)	X^2 =9.87 df =4 p = 0.04*
	RS	208 (43.20)	235 (48.90)	32 (6.70)	6 (1.20)	0 (0)	
E-mail	PG	297 (41.90)	338 (47.70)	63 (8.90)	6 (0.80)	4 (0.60)	X^2 =1.11 df =4 p = 0.89
	RS	205 (42.60)	233 (48.40)	34 (7.10)	8 (1.70)	1 (0.20)	

Notes: n = 1189, figures in parentheses indicate percentage, PG = Post Graduates, RS = Research Scholars.

5.3 VIEWPOINTS REGARDING WEB-BASED MARKETING TOOLS AND USER CATEGORY

The viewpoints of the respondents in Table 3 regarding Web based marketing strategies are presented. Data analysis strongly brought out facts that around two-third students from both categories stated that library website would be a suitable marketing tool. A great majority of users from both categories (81.70 per cent to 83.20 per cent) agreed that library website integrated with Web 2.0 tools may be a strong platform or interface for promoting library resources and services. About 86.00 per cent users from both groups equally acceded that SMS alert service would make them aware about news, events and notices, library membership, subscription to new e-resources, new arrival of journals or books and table of contents. Web OPAC as a marketing tool would guide them in introducing the library, creating user account or login and online reservation of books, new arrivals, availability of books, expected list of books, checking the status of books, whether issued or on shelf and lending policies. The analysis also showed that most of the post graduates (88.60 per cent) and research scholars (92.10 per cent) accepted this statement. With regard to e-mail as a promotional technique, about 90.00 per cent from both categories of students consented that it would inform about the new arrivals of the journals as well as books, subscription of new electronic resources, table of contents, news, events and important notices.

Chi square results were considered where p values were found to be significant $(p<0.05)$ for library website, website integrated with Web 2.0 tools, SMS alerts and Web OPAC. However, the p value was found to be insignificant $(p>0.05)$ only in case of e-mail (Table 3). Hence, the hypothesis "H2: Significant differences exist between the viewpoints of post graduates and Research Scholars for adoption of Web based marketing strategies" is almost accepted.

5.4 VIEWPOINTS REGARDING TRADITIONAL LIBRARY MARKETING TOOLS AND USER CATEGORY

In response to the traditional library marketing tools as shown in Table 4, more than 86.00 per cent respondents from both groups acknowledged that workshops would be worthwhile in giving the practical experience to use the library and its electronic resources. Around three-fourth respondents

Table 4: View points Regarding Traditional Library Marketing Tools and User Category

Marketing Tools/Techniques	Users' Category	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Chi-square value (X^2)
Workshops	PG	248 (35.00)	362 (51.10)	86 (12.10)	8 (1.10)	4 (0.60)	X^2 =8.37 df = 4 p = 0.08
	RS	196 (40.70)	229 (47.60)	45 (9.40)	8 (1.70)	3 (0.60)	
Library quiz and contests	PG	209 (29.50)	332 (46.90)	138 (19.50)	26 (3.70)	3 (0.40)	X^2 =9.34 df = 4 p = 0.05*
	RS	106 (22.00)	248 (51.60)	104 (21.60)	20 (4.20)	3 (0.60)	
Media campaign (radio, television and newspapers)	PG	240 (33.90)	346 (48.90)	113 (16.00)	8 (1.10)	1 (0.10)	X^2 =9.88 df = 4 p = 0.04*
	RS	146 (30.40)	246 (51.10)	76 (15.80)	10 (2.10)	3 (0.60)	
Flyers, users' guides and brochures	PG	120 (16.90)	327 (46.20)	239 (33.80)	21 (3.00)	1 (0.10)	X^2 =9.72 df = 4 p = 0.05*
	RS	110 (22.90)	212 (44.10)	146 (30.40)	10 (2.10)	3 (0.60)	
Guide maps or floor plans	PG	196 (27.70)	389 (54.90)	116 (16.40)	7 (1.00)	0 (0)	X^2 =5.87 df = 4 p = 0.21
	RS	151 (31.40)	251 (52.20)	66 (13.70)	10 (2.10)	3 (0.60)	
Book exhibitions	PG	262 (37.00)	347 (49.00)	88 (12.40)	9 (1.30)	2 (0.30)	X^2 =15.52 df = 4 p = 0.00**
	RS	189 (39.30)	253 (52.60)	34 (7.10)	4 (0.80)	1 (0.20)	
User education programme	PG	223 (31.50)	382 (54.00)	95 (13.40)	7 (1.00)	1 (0.10)	X^2 =3.72 df = 4 p = 0.44
	RS	195 (40.50)	241 (50.10)	38 (7.90)	6 (1.20)	1 (0.20)	
Word of mouth or personal interactions	PG	235 (33.20)	339 (47.90)	112 (15.80)	18 (2.50)	4 (0.60)	X^2 =5.10 df = 4 p = 0.28
	RS	159 (33.10)	232 (48.20)	72 (15.00)	12 (2.50)	6 (1.20)	

Notes: n = 1189, figures in parentheses indicate percentage, PG = Post Graduates, RS = Research Scholars.

from both categories said that library quiz andcontest can be a good marketing tool that might be successful in increasing awareness about library resources and services. In response to the statement on media campaign(radio, television and newspapers), an overwhelming majority from both classes (82.80 to 83.60 per cent) mentioned that it would be beneficial to make them familiar with new arrivals, events, book exhibition, news and important notices.A good majority with minor differences(63.10 per cent post graduates and 67.00 per cent research scholars) said that flyers, brochures and users' guides as marketing tool would be of use in giving the general information about the library resources and services like books, journals, electronic resources, reference material, reference service and inter library loan service. An attempt was also made to know whether guide maps or floor plans would be useful in knowing stack area and floor arrangements of the library resources like books, reference material, maps, archives, thesis and audio-visual materials, more than 80.00 per cent respondents from both groups agreed to the statement.In response to the question regarding book exhibitions, 86.00 per cent post graduates and about 92.00 per cent research scholars admitted that this marketing tool would make them aware about important and relevant books (new and old) in the library. As regards the user education programme as another traditional marketing tool, 85.50 per cent post graduates and 90.60 per cent research scholars agreed that it would make them familiar about library resources and services, e-resources, how to search books, journals and online resources. Perception regarding word of mouth or personal interaction as a marketing tool was taken from the respondents to which around 81.00 per cent from both categories of the users agreed that it would help them in knowing the resources, services, collection and facilities of the entire library.

The result showed that *p*-values for workshops, guide maps, user education programme, word of mouth or personal interaction were found to be insignificant ($p>0.05$) while *p*-values regarding library quiz, contests, media campaign, flyers, users' guides, brochures and book exhibitions were found to be significant ($p<0.05$). Hence, the hypothesis "H3: Significant differences exist between opinions of two categories of students with regard to use of traditional marketing tools in libraries of present era" is partially accepted.

6   CONCLUSION

This study sought the perspectives of research scholars and postgraduate students pertaining to the use of modern and traditional tools of marketing for making them aware of the library resourcesin a better way. The study revealed that a good majority of post graduates and research scholars from eight universities agreed that Web and social media based marketing techniques should be used to promote library resources and services to connect user to libraries in an era of technological advances. The implementation of these marketing strategies will facilitate the libraries to effectively meet user information needs as well as to increase optimum use of their products and services. Therefore, university libraries of North-Western India should embrace Web and Web 2.0 based marketing tools in the current scenario of fast changing technologies in order to make them more and more aware about the library resources and services.Also in this era of new emerging technologies, the traditional promotional tools are still relevant. So the libraries should not ignore the traditional marketing tools to supplement promotional activities.

The study also revealed that there were significant differences between the two categories of students about their viewpoints with respect of acceptance of various social networking sites (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Linked In), RSS feed, podcast, vodcast, wikis, Web OPAC, website, SMS alerts, book exhibition, flyers, brochures, users' guides, library quiz,contests and media campaign (radio, television and newspapers) as marketing techniques. The limitation of this study is that it was conducted on eight state universities of North-Western India. Other private and central universities were not part of this study as the resources, facilities and budget provisions of their libraries are not comparable in absolute terms.

7   FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on this study, the authors propose that similar studies may be taken up on users' viewpoints belonging to different streams regarding marketing of library resources and services of university libraries. Further, the research can be carried out regarding users' opinion in special libraries. And also such studies can be conducted in different parts of India to widen research scope.

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