

Electronic Marketing of Library Resources and Content Utilization by Students in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in South-South Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between electronic marketing of library resources and content utilization by students in Federal Polytechnic libraries in South-South Nigeria. The electronic marketing Indices examine in this work are library website and library Facebook page. Correlational survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 11 electronic library staff and 4,725 registered library users totaling 4, 736 electronic library staff and registered library users. 392 electronic library staff and registered library users were sampled. Census sampling technique was used to sample all the 11 electronic library staff while a sample size of 381 registered library users was drawn using Krejcie and Morgan sampling size table. Disproportionate stratified sampling technique was used to sample the 381 registered library users. A structured questionnaire developed and face validated by the researcher was used to elicit information from the respondents. The obtained data was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis revealed a significant relationship between electronic marketing of library resources and content utilization by students in Federal Polytechnic Libraries in South-South Nigeria. The results and findings of this study were primarily derived and analyzed by the authors. It is an exclusive study in the field of library and information science. The study will help inform management of Polytechnic libraries in South-South Nigeria of the need to capitalize on the prospects presented by electronic technologies to market their information resources for improved patronage.

Keywords: E-marketing, Library resources, emerging tools, content utilization, students.

INTRODUCTION

Polytechnic libraries exist to cater for the information needs of every member of the community in which it is located. Their primary purpose is to support teaching, learning and research. They store information resources in print and electronic formats. They are seen as treasures of knowledge found in various forms of information resource (Vandie *tal*, 2024). In recent years, Polytechnic libraries have witnessed a substantial shift, which is influenced by the advancement of Information Technology (IT) and it has drastically changed the operation of libraries. The changes have significantly affected the services provided by library to esteem clientele. According to Okolo, (2024) the transformation made by the technological landscape has cut across all professions and they all use these technologies to provide services in order to meet the needs of their clients.

Adeh and Hayatu, (2021) buttressed that, the shift from traditional libraries with site-specific collection to digital libraries where information and knowledge sources have no geographical boundaries seems to expand the extent to which polytechnic libraries provide services to users. Polytechnic libraries have come of age, they have evolved from being a physical book management exercise to electronic structure management, and now, to a combination of the other two as well as an interface with digital realities. According to Sumadevi, (2014) it is indeed the primary source of information to students, faculty, staff and the entire polytechnic community due to the fact that its resources and services satisfies the academic and curricular needs of members of the institution. Polytechnic libraries act as vehicle for disseminating information and the related computer technologies through the best practices for utilization by its community of users and also for the exchange of information among its users. The use of smartphones, laptops and other digital devices connected to the internet gives information users unlimited access to information at the comfort of their homes, offices, classrooms and other convenient

places (Aloysius,*etal*, 2019). Apart from the presence of emerging technologies, polytechnic libraries in Nigeria are plagued with other problems such as explosive growth of information and documents, increase in users' information needs, changing demands in research and teaching, increased cost of the documents and information materials, new techniques and concepts in handling of information among others. Xia (2009) asserts that popular internet search engines such as Google.com and Yahoo.com have altered the role of libraries by offering students easier ways to discover research materials online and are cutting the necessity of physically visiting a library. Li (2009) affirmed that computer technology and web tools have radically altered the function of many polytechnic libraries and have permanently altered the professional duties and responsibilities of polytechnic librarians.

Therefore, polytechnic libraries should proactively catch up with recent flow of information and attempt to meet the user's need through the medium which they deem convenient. Helinsky (2008), warned that if libraries, do not act now to demonstrate how important they are and how significant a resource they constitute for the whole of society, they will just not be noticed in the ongoing information flow. Chisita (2014) opined that the basic characteristic of a good academic library is its total identification with its institution, because the measure of its excellence is determined by the extent to which its services support the academic pursuits of all the members of the institution. Consequently, to facilitate and sustain the use of library resources by users, marketing of library resources electronically need to be giving a maximum attention in polytechnic libraries. This becomes necessary because the 21st century information users need real time information service delivery. This would apparently stimulate their interest in the library and make study and research pleasurable. Petrowicz (2020) avowed that academic library which the polytechnic library is one, need electronic marketing services to keep the connection with researchers and further develop their functions and remain viable and competitive in this new information environment. This will allow the researchers to effectively learn and maximally utilize the resources and services offered. Electronic marketing is a tool to achieve these pressing needs of the library users. Aloysius,*etal* (2019) opined that electronic marketing remains the most effective antidote to remedy poor patronage and sustain library services in Nigerian polytechnic libraries. Electronic marketing refers to the application of marketing ideology and techniques via electronic media and more specifically through Internet (Mutongi&Chiwanza, 2016). Electronic marketing involves advocating for libraries, publicizing resources and services and convincing people of the value and relevance of the library. It means not waiting passively for users but actively going out to seek them. It is a step beyond the traditional way of meeting the information needs of the users. It is an effective means of making library resources to be available and accessible in different formats or platforms for their effective utilization. Electronic marketing is a process of planning, executing, and promoting the products and services by using Information Communication Technologies (ICT) to meet the users' need (Sahue *tal*, 2018). The concept of electronic marketing of libraries resources is quite innovative because the traditional concept has been changed from marketing to electronic marketing. The world today prefers to have the digital environment and libraries are also trying to achieve their goals in this regard. In the library point of view, it is conceptualized as the process of creating awareness of the existing resources and services in the library using digital technologies. The electronic marketing tools to be considered in this work are ; library websites and library Facebook page.

Statement of the problem

Polytechnic libraries exist to provide specialized information services and resources to members of the academic community where they are situated. They are indeed the primary source of information for the teaching and research purposes in the academic community. However, in recent years, the utilization of polytechnic libraries has reduced drastically. This has observed is attributed to the emergence of new technologies and rapid information explosion which creates alternative source of information for users. To assume its position as the primary information provider to the academic community, there is need for polytechnic libraries to engage in aggressive marketing of their services and resources electronically. This will help create awareness of the existence of resources and services available in the library thus, increase utilization of what is provided. Electronic marketing is one of the most effective ways of sustaining library services amidst new technologies

Objectives of the study

1. Determine the relationship between the library websites and content utilisation by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

2. Investigate the relationship between the library Facebook page and content utilisation by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Research questions

1. What is the relationship between the library websites and content utilisation by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between the library Facebook page and content utilisation by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria?

Research hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between the library websites and content utilisation by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria
2. There is no significant relationship between the library Facebook page and content utilisation by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria

Scope of the Study

The study will be delimited to Federal Polytechnic Ukana, AkwaIbom State, Auchi Polytechnic Edo State, Federal Polytechnic of Oil and Gas Bonny, Rivers State, and Federal Polytechnic Ekowe, Bayelsa State. It will focus on electronic marketing of library resources and content utilisation by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria. The study will cover 391 electronic library staff and registered library users. The following variables will be covered in the study; electronic marketing, library resources, content utilisation, websites, electronic mail, Facebook, YouTube, blogs and Instagram.

Conceptual framework

Electronic Marketing

Electronic marketing is derived from the traditional marketing concept by the help of information communication technologies and web 2.0 tools which consists websites, blogs, Rich Site Summary or Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds, social networking sites and electronic mailing System among others (Sahu, Deb, & Mazumder, 2018). Electronic marketing of library resources is the process of marketing the information resources in the library using Internet. Electronic marketing is making available the resources of the library on real time to encourage its utilisation by the users. Before now, telephone, postal services, newspapers, radio and television were the major sources used to communicate to consumers, but now along with these tools, Internet is also being used as a source to reach and communicate to patrons (Pandya, 2013). Electronic marketing refers to the application of marketing ideology and techniques via electronic media and more specifically through Internet (Mutongiand Chiwanza, 2016). Aloysius, *e tal* (2019) opined that electronic marketing remains the most effective antidote to remedy poor patronage and continued library services in Nigerian academic libraries. This is to say that the importance of electronic marketing in the library cannot be overemphasized. Electronic marketing is the method of utilising information technology to promote and encourage effective utilisation of the holdings of the library.

Content Utilization

Content utilization refers to the information that has been made use of or the act of using the information gotten from the library resources. It is the actual usage or consumption of library resources and services by information seekers and users to meet their information needs (Solanke & Nwalo, 2016). Utilization is greatly influenced by the quality of information services, staff, especially the librarians, physical facilities, library environment, user education and other services. It holds that, for utilization to take place in the polytechnic libraries there must equally be qualitative and effective services provided to meet the information needs of the users. The polytechnic libraries therefore, must explore all available means to market and deliver quality library services which will

stand the test of time and which will ultimately lead to user satisfaction. This is because, the whole essence of polytechnic libraries is to satisfy the need of its users by providing information resources and services that complement the polytechnic programmes. Uhegbu (2007) defined utilisation as the actual putting into appropriate use of acquired information. He is of the view that library resources utilization differs from person to person and from one corporate organization to another in accordance with their information needs and other socio-economic imperatives need, therefore, is a critical factor in the utilisation of library resources.

Websites and Content Utilization

Website is a collection of related web pages, including multimedia content, typically identified with a common domain name, and published on at least one web server (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2018). A website may be accessible via a public Internet Protocol (IP) network, such as the Internet, or a private Local Area Network (LAN), by referencing a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) that identifies the site (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2018). Libraries, the world over, used website to market their resources and services. It is one of the fastest ways to notify users of existing resources and services available in the library. A website is a set of web pages accessible through the internet, conveniently linked and with a specific purpose. It is identified by a unique URL, which is usually the home page.

They seek to encourage users to purchase products or service. The library's website is the digital hub that instantly connects patrons to what the library has to offer that may include online resources, upcoming programs, new arrivals and book lists among other types of contents that the library may want to showcase. One benefit of a Library Market website is centralized dynamic content: specialized content types that are tailored to best present each type of content, in turn boasting a streamlined content entry process for staff and a cohesive display across the site (Godaddy, 2022). In the context of the library, Shau, *e tal* (2018) opined that, a website can be one of the best tools which can attract the attention of the users for electronic marketing. The library website is a platform where users and library professionals can interact and communicate information resources and services. Website collates databases, e-texts and e-journals, and Online Public Access Catalogue to represent the library system virtually. Moreover, it avails the internal products and resources for Information gathering, generating, organizing, and accessing. A website can play a vital role and library professionals can make use of it adequately.

Nooshinfard and Ziaei (2011) noted that as libraries shift services to the Internet, the library website becomes an important tool in marketing library's products. Library websites are instrumental in the promotion and dissemination of information to all users. Academic and research activities are web-based services that play an important role (Mandrekar & Rodrigues, 2021).

Facebook and Content Utilization

Facebook is a social networking site that involves connecting with people. It is a major service that is very useful in modern day Library practices which is very useful in document delivery. Information is sent to the various subject specialists that are involved in content selection through Facebook platform. Facebook is a popular and free social networking site that allows users to create profiles, upload photographs, and videos, send images and keep in touch with friends, family, and colleagues. Facebook is the most popular social media platform for creating library awareness and marketing (Chu & Du, 2013). Through the Facebook page, librarians can draw users' attention to useful hidden treasures of the library that library users have forgotten or are not aware of, such as grey literature (Potter, 2012). Using Facebook, the library user community can be made aware of and updated on the library events by creating descriptive hashtags, such as #e-resourcestrainings, which can also be used on other sites such as Twitter (Mundt, 2013). Facebook video streaming is vital for marketing the library by conducting virtual user education and showcasing unique library services. For example, demonstrating how users can employ Boolean operators "AND, OR, IF, THEN, EXCEPT and NOT" to access electronic resources that the library subscribes to (Oloo & Luyombya, 2023).

Through Facebook platforms, reference librarians can provide answers to users enquires without him or her travelling to find the materials. Sending and receiving messages using Facebook services is one of the quickest and fastest methods of communication. Librarians can now send messages and also attach documents before

sending. Oftentimes, while attempting to perform Library operations, librarians need to communicate with one another who may not be in close proximity. With Facebook services that distance is no longer a barrier and therefore, librarians can send messages to colleagues and collaborate with on related issues. Facebook has its numerous benefits; it allows instant messaging, chat and apps. Besides, apart from allowing its users to customize their profile, Facebook allows them to post pictures on their 'walls or upload in albums and post videos (Odu&Omini, 2017). A librarian can open a Facebook page, which is free, and customize it so as to the use it for members of his or her constituencies. The above views agree with Daniel (2013), that mobile phone apps have allowed present day libraries to over shadow the conventional library methods.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Website and Content Utilization

Okechukwu and Anunobi (2020) investigated availability and usability of academic library websites. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The sample size consisted of 392 registered undergraduate library user determined from YaroYamene formula. Instrument used for data collection were checklist and questionnaire. Data obtained were analysed using percentages and mean ratings. Findings of the study indicated that federal universities in South East Nigeria, have library websites for their various libraries. They have websites with Universal Resource Locators (URLs) specifically for the libraries; while the librarians have links on the university main website; the students found out about library websites through their friends followed by the library workstation, then library staff members. The result also showed that in the last six months, the users have approximately visited the library website on a weekly basis. The study recommended among others that libraries should start paying more attention to their websites as today's users are increasingly living their lives online. This study relates to the present study because they both studied electronic marketing of library resources through library websites and content utilization in academic libraries. The only difference is that the present study focuses on users of polytechnic libraries.

Facebook and Content Utilization

Kirita and Mwantimwa (2021) investigated the use of social media in marketing library resources and services. The study was conducted at the libraries of the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) in Dar es Salaam and Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) in Morogoro region. The libraries were chosen because they use social media to market their services and resources. These academic libraries are among those that have integrated ICTs in their operations and service provision. Specifically, the two libraries have integrated web services to support the promotion, dissemination and sharing of information among librarians and patrons. More significantly, the two libraries have formalized the use of social media to support the promotion of services resources, dissemination and sharing of information and knowledge to enhance the accessibility and usability of library and information resources and services. The population of the study includes librarians, students and academicians. Librarians were involved because they market library resources whereas students and academicians are the users of the marketed library resources and services. In all, 105 respondents (64 students, 26 academic staff and 15 library staff) participated in the study. Among these, 59 were drawn from SUA and 46 from MUHAS. The respondents were selected mainly using convenience and purposive sampling technique. A mixed research approach was used to process, collect and analyze data in the study. While some library staff and all users were conveniently selected, key informants were purposively selected. The data were mainly collected through survey methods. The qualitative data collected were subjected to content analysis while quantitative data were analysed using SPSS. The findings reveal that a significant percentage (73.3%) of library staff cited Facebook as the most used platform to market library resources and services. Similarly, during interview sessions, one key informant informed that Facebook is preferred by the majority of users due to its popularity and convenience of use. This implies that Facebook is the effectively used platform by both the studied libraries in the marketing of library services and resources due to its popularity and convenience. The study recommends that social media policies should be formulated, investment in ICT infrastructure development should be made, and promotion of social media usage among information users should be done.

METHODOLOGY

Correlational survey design was adopted for this study. This study was conducted in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. The population of this study consists of 4,736 electronic library staff and registered library users in four federal polytechnics libraries in south-south, Nigeria. It covered the 2023/2024 academic session. 392 electronic and registered library users were sampled. Census sampling technique was used to sample all the 11 electronic library staff, while a sample size of 381 registered library users was drawn using Krejcie and Morgan sampling size table. Thereafter, disproportionate sampling technique was used to sample all the 381 registered library users. The data generated was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment

RESULT AND FINDINGS

Research Question One

What is the degree of relationship between the library websites and content utilisation by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 1: The result of r-value of Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the relationship between the library websites and content utilisation by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria (n= 387)

| Variables | $\sum X$ | $\sum X^2$ | $\sum XY$ | r-value | Decision |
|---------------------|----------|------------|-----------|---------|-----------------------|
| | $\sum Y$ | $\sum Y^2$ | | | |
| Library Websites | 1023 | 1046529 | | | |
| | | | 1179519 | 0.751 | positive relationship |
| Content Utilisation | 1153 | 1329409 | | | |

Source: Researcher's Field Work, 2025

The result presented in Table 1 reveals the r-value of 0.751, which indicates a positive relationship between library websites and content utilization by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria. This indicates that the ability of electronic library staff to use library websites for service delivery attracts a positive corresponding increase in content utilization by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Question Two

What is the relationship between library Facebook page and content utilisation by students in federal Polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 2: The result of r-value of Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the relationship between the library Facebook page and content utilisation by students in federal Polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria (n= 387)

| Variables | $\sum X$ | $\sum X^2$ | $\sum XY$ | r-value | Decision |
|-----------------------|----------|------------|-----------|---------|-----------------------|
| | $\sum Y$ | $\sum Y^2$ | | | |
| Library Facebook page | 1121 | 1256641 | | | |
| | | | 1661322 | 0.738 | Positive relationship |
| Content Utilisation | 1482 | 2196324 | | | |

Source: Researcher's Field Work, 2025

The result presented in Table 2 reveals the r-value of 0.738, which indicates a positive relationship between library Facebook page and content utilization by students in federal Polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria. This indicates that the ability of electronic library staff to use library Facebook page for service delivery attracts a positive corresponding increase in content utilization by students in federal Polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Question Three

What is the joint relationship between electronic marketing of library resources and content utilization by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South Nigeria?

Table 3: The result of r-value of Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the joint relationship between electronic marketing of library resources and content utilization by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South Nigeria (n= 387)

| Variables | ΣX | ΣX^2 | ΣXY | r-value | Decision |
|--------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|---------|-----------------------|
| | ΣY | ΣY^2 | | | |
| Elect. Mkt of Libr. Res. | 5134 | 26357956 | | | |
| | | | 34346460 | 0.817 | positive relationship |
| Content Utilisation | 6690 | 44756100 | | | |

Source: Researcher's Field Work, 2025

The result presented in Table 3 reveals the r-value of 0.817, which indicates a very strong relationship between electronic marketing of library resources and content utilization by students in federal Polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria. This indicates that the ability of electronic library staff to use library blog page for service delivery attracts a positive corresponding increase in content utilization by students in federal Polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Hypotheses One

There is no significant relationship between the library websites and content utilisation by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the relationship between the library websites and content utilisation by students in federal polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria (n= 387)

| Variables | ΣX | ΣX^2 | ΣXY | r-value | Sig. | Decision |
|---------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|---------|------|-------------|
| | ΣY | ΣY^2 | | | | |
| Library Websites | 1023 | 1046529 | | | | |
| | | | 1179519 | 0.751 | .01 | Significant |
| Content Utilisation | 1153 | 1329409 | | | | |

*Significant at .05 level, df = 375

Source: Researcher's Field Work, 2025

The result in Table 4.8 shows the r-value of 0.751 while the corresponding probability level of significance is

.01 alpha (2-tailed) at 385 degrees of freedom. This level of significance is less than .05 in which the decision is based. Also, the calculated r-value of 0.751 is greater than the critical r-value of .098. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between library websites and content utilisation by students in federal Polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Hypotheses Two

There is no significant relationship between the library Facebook page and content utilisation by students in federal Polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria

Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the relationship between the library Facebook page and content utilisation by students in federal Polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria (n= 387)

| Variables | $\sum X$ | $\sum X^2$ | $\sum XY$ | r-value Sig. | Decision |
|-----------------------|----------|------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|
| | $\sum Y$ | $\sum Y^2$ | | | |
| Library Facebook page | 1121 | 1256641 | | | |
| | | | 1661322 | 0.738 0.1 | Significant |
| Content Utilisation | 1482 | 2196324 | | | |

*Significant at .05 level, df = 385

Source: Researcher's Field Work, 2025

The result in Table 5 shows the r-value of 0.738 while the corresponding probability level of significance is .01 alpha (2-tailed) at 385 degrees of freedom. This level of significance is less than .05 in which the decision is based. Also, the calculated r-value of 0.738 is greater than the critical r-value of .098. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between library Facebook page and content utilisation by students in federal Polytechnic libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

In this forth industrial age, electronic marketing remains an essential element of library services. Libraries and information providers in South- South Nigeria should take lead of the numerous opportunities presented by the internet and other web 2.0 technologies to market their information to the global world. For effective information handling and management, effective marketing should be used to promote access to library and information services as a panacea towards sustainable Nigerian libraries in the digital age.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Management of polytechnic libraries in South-South Nigeria should properly equip their libraries with modern ICT facilities and resources that will enhance and increase the level of utilization of library services and its resources
2. Management of the library should engage in aggressive use of their Facebook platform and other digital device to create awareness of the holdings of the library.

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