Marketing of Business School Libraries: A Case Study of Guru Nanak Institute of Management Studies (GNIMS)

A. Ganesan [1]; Neelam R. Chavan [2]

Research Guide, Bharthiar University, Coimbatore

& Head & Librarian, Shri Pushpam College, Poondi,[1];

Research Student, Bharthiar University, Coimbatore

,& Librarian, Guru Nanak Khalsa College, Mumbai [2]

ayyapillaiganesan@yahoo.com[1]; crneelam@gmail.com[2]

ABSTRACT

Academic Libraries are facing challenges of rising cost of library resources, shrinking library budgets, stiff competition from networked information, and changed perception of users. To face these challenges effectively, academic libraries have started adopting marketing principles or techniques in their day-to-day working. The paper is written with the purpose to analyze the use of marketing techniques in the B-School Library. It was found that adopting modern marketing techniques helped the GNIMS Library for designing effective and efficient library system.

General Terms
Library Marketing, Market Segments, Marketing Mixes

Keywords: **Library: Marketing, Library Marketing Segmentation, Service Marketing**

1. INTRODUCTION

At the end of 20th century and beginning of 21st century, Academic Library and Information Science Professionals in India were arguing whether marketing principles should be adopted to the service institutes like Libraries or not. At the same time, the world of Academic Libraries faced with lot of challenges such as rising cost of library resources, shrinking library budgets, stiff competition from Google, all information is available on the Internet, which enabled entry of other information providers as the competitors of library business, changed perception of users for the information, who see the library just as the last option for the need of information, availability of information in variety of forms and formats, increased value of information as a commodity or product in the era of Information age. To face all these challenges effectively and efficiently, academic libraries in India started employing various kinds of marketing methods or techniques to satisfy and retain their users. Marketing concepts are increasingly adapted within the library environment. Libraries are discovering that by using marketing principles and techniques, they can understand better their users' needs, justify funding, communicate more effectively with a variety of external audiences, and achieve greater

efficiency and optimal results in delivering products and services that meet the identified needs of their clients.

The Concept of Marketing and Library Marketing:

According to Philip Kotler, marketing deals with identifying and meeting human and social needs. The definition "Marketing is the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of carefully formulated programs designed to bring about voluntary ex- changes of values with target audiences for the purposes of achieving organizational objectives. It relies heavily on designing the organization's offerings in terms of the target market's needs and desires, and on using effective pricing, communication, and distributions to inform, motivate, and service the markets."

The aim of marketing activities by libraries (library marketing) is to give better services to their users, or patrons, so that they are able to get better reputations, to be recognized as more reliable organizations, and to get more customer satisfaction (CS), or patron satisfaction (PS) eventually. In addition to this aim, it is preferable to perform their jobs more efficiently, and with less cost; that can be another important aim of library marketing.

Few Marketing Techniques or methods, which academic libraries can adopt are as follows:

Making Library Marketing plan or policy: Any marketing activity starts with making an appropriate policy of marketing for the library.

The marketing policy of the library should be designed in the light of vision, mission statement of the academic institution. At the beginning of the Academic year, marketing plan should be worked out in the light of marketing policy designed by the library management. The marketing plan will be week-wise, month-wise or semester-wise. This plan will work as a guideline for the marketing activities of the institute. The policy as well as plan should be designed taking into consideration interest of all stakeholders of the library namely, Students, Teachers, Library Staff, and management. For every change in the academic activity, existing policy and plan needs to be scrutinized for changed academic demand. If required the new policy and plan needs to be designed taking into consideration new demands of all stakeholders. All the decisions related to plan and implementation of policy and plan should be taken in the library committee's meeting and with the approval by the authority of academic institutes.

Defining Market Segments for the Library: The great management scholar Philip Kotler defines Market segmentation as 'It is a process of identifying groups of buyers with different desires or requirements. The idea of dividing library users into different segments is an effective mechanism to impart value added services and facilities to the respective group of users.

Market segmentation of library is possible in various ways. We can divide users based on categories, classes, courses, curriculum as well as streams. It also can be combination of one or two options together (for e.g. Curriculum and categories)

Planning and imparting different Service Norms to Different Segments

By dividing library users into different segments as above, librarian can devise the norms and method of serving for each individual segment. There are special demands of each segment.

Promotional activities by the Library: Simultaneously with devising various set of services for their users, librarian should focus on promotional activities to spread awareness and importance of library and its facilities and services. Many times it happens due to lack of experience of using library in the past, users do not know the library system. They should be aware of the general rules and regulations of the service delivery, so that they will interact peacefully with the library staff. It will enhance the library use without any disorder.

Libraries as Service providing firm should adopt peculiar features of service marketing: Libraries around the world deal with imparting information or knowledge in various mediums. Libraries relate to the paradigm of service marketing. Specific characteristics of Services are intangibility, inseparability, inconsistency, performance based character, user centric approach. Apart from product, price, place, promotion to be used as marketing mix, people, process, and physical evidence are peculiar mixes

for service marketing. All these marketing mixes are applicable to Academic Libraries also.

2. LITERATURE SEARCH

Asghar, Mah-e-Bushra & Bhatti, Rubina (2014) conducted the study of Marketing in University Libraries of South Punjab, Pakistan. Library professionals working in the universities of South Punjab have positive attitude towards the implementation of marketing in libraries for the maximum utilization of library resources. But at the same time it revealed that marketing is considered as promotion only. With the emergence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), new channels for the delivery of services and products are required. Integrated and continuous team work is also necessary for the success of marketing in libraries. User involvement in the designing process of services and an evaluation system is also a prerequisite.

Suresh Kumar P.K. (2013), study of University Libraries of Kerala reveals that all the university librarians have a positive opinions about marketing but none of the libraries has specific allocation of funds or a designated person or a marketing wing for marketing of information products and services. Most of the libraries identified certain problems encountered in the marketing of information products and services such as lack of trained staff and less demand for the existing resources and services. It is indeed for the university libraries to initiate new information services and products suitable for the different user groups. i.e. efforts towards content development and repackaged information in the printed and digital format based on the information requirements of the users. From the analysis of the marketing elements namely, product, place, price and promotion, in the university libraries it is observed that university libraries in Kerala must undertake better promotional activities, because a successful marketing plan demands careful attention to promotional strategies. Also it was found that university library wise difference in marketing activities is significant.

Dr. M. Madhusudhan study (2008), Goa University library applied classic marketing techniques as part of a campaign to commoditize library products and services in order to achieve a degree of self-sufficiency and to recoup some of the library's

continuously rising operational costs. The assumption behind this approach is that the university library is an indispensable player in India's information economy, serving the needs of its local user populations as well as making material contributions to Indian society. Though part of the library's broad based cost-for-service schedule, such as the separate annual library membership fee levied on Goa University-affiliated patrons, is unlikely to be widely replicated in American public university libraries, some form of pay-for-service (like pay-per-view access instead of journal subscriptions) is almost certain to be an element in the marketing plans of many American university libraries

3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

In the light of above studies, the present paper is written with the purpose to analyze the marketing techniques use Guru Nanak Institute of Management Studies and to study the value addition it makes to the library system.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

For the purpose of this study, marketing techniques used by Guru Nanak Institute of Management Studies (GNIMS) Library are analyzed.

Objectives of this study are:

•To examine whether GNIMS library makes use of marketing Plan/Policy and implement it in day to day functioning

•To access the practices of Market Segmentation adopted by GNIMS & using these Segments to plan Library Resources and Services

•To understand the Promotional Activities undertaken by GNIMS to attract the users

•To analyze the marketing mixes exercised by GNIMS Library, specially meant for service marketing.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is the case study of management or B-School Library. This research is done by using structured questionnaire as a tool for data collection. Questionnaire is filled by the Librarian, at the same time the interview of Librarian was conducted.

Data Analysis is done using qualitative analysis method, which uses specially designed checklist to analyze the marketing practices of GNIMS.

The checklist contains about four parameters of library marketing, namely, marketing policy/plan, market segmentation, promotional practices, and marketing mixes techniques which serves as a recording device for descriptive data.

6. RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.1 Market Policy/Plan

It was found that GNIMS adopts library plan which includes marketing strategies at the beginning of each academic year. For Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) classes, they redefine the policy every year.

6.2 Market Segmentation

It is discussed in table 2 specialized segments served by GNIMS library, with specific services and resources provided to each segment.

Table 1: Market segments with service specialization for GNIMS Library

Sr. No.	Specific Segment of User	Specific Resources offered	Specific Services offered
1	Full Time Students	Resources to the students in the form of books, non-book materials, build taking into account the need of curriculum, AICTE Guidelines and Users' Demand into consideration.	New Arrivals, Specified WhatsApp Groups of students, User Education on E-Resources, Orientation
2	Part Time Students		Renewal through Telephone or email/ Specified WhatsApp Groups for Book Notification, User Education on E-Resources, Orientation
3	Corporate Users	Resources in the Form	Renewal through Telephone or
		of Books and Non Books Materials. Access to High value reference books and journals and E-Resources in Management	email
4	Temporary Users	Resources available for users of other libraries under ILL	ILL, Visitors
5	Staff of GNIMS	Resources of all kinds depending their information need	WhatsApp Groups/ Monthly Display of New Books to acquire new titles in the Library

6.3 Promotional Activities

Table 2 gives list of promotional activities adopted by GNIMS Library for making users' aware of various services and facilities of the Library.

Table 2: Promotional Mix for GNIMS Library

Sr. No.	Promotional Technique undertaken
1	Library Orientation
2	Database Education by Library Staff
3	Database Education by Database Vendor (For e.g. ProQuest)
4	Organization of Annual International Research Conference under the Theme "Library: A Temple of Learning" as a brand building activity for the institute
5	Vibrant Library Website: www.lib.gnims.com/

6	Monthly Display of New Books for students and faculties
7	Library Facility is extended to BMS/BMM UG students of Khalsa College as a promotional activity

6.4 Marketing Mixes for Library

GNIMS is using following marketing mixes, which are special features of service marketing are;

6.4.1 People: People (library Staff) matter the most in the library. In library Quality of Service depends on the library staff. GNIMS indulge in best practices for this mix. There is periodic training arranged for library staff to gain new knowledge and skills. Orientation is given to the new recruit in the Library, there is correct placement according to skills and experience, there is system of periodic feedback on efficiency of library staff in delivering services, the training on soft skills has been given to smoothen the user interaction and processes.

6.4.2 Process: All processes in the Library i.e. acquisition, periodicals, circulation, cataloguing are user centric or customer based. Also, all these processes are fully automated.

6.4.3 Physical Evidence: When library is giving a particular service, the user is physically present in the library. What matters to the user is the physical evidence/surrounding of the library. To attract the user and give them better experience of service librarian need to think of the physical evidence/surrounding in which service is given. Library should have modern look with modern day furniture, technology. Library Reading room of GNIMS is quite spacious and pleasant, necessary changes in seating are being done according to users' feedback. Library is fully air conditioned, with proper lighting and ventilation facility. Library staff is cooperative and competent to solve circulation and reference desks. Proper training to handle books and E-Resources is being to the staff.

7. CONCLUSION

GNIMS library using all above marketing techniques is able to provide resources and services effectively to its users. It helped the GNIMS library to streamline its library system adopting modern marketing techniques in its functioning. The findings of this study can be generalized to all Business School Libraries or Management Institutions. B-School Libraries. Adapting modern management techniques helps in designing effective and efficient library system. It helps to project the library among its users. It helps basically to all stakeholders of the Library in a way of value addition. It helps smooth functioning of day-today activities as all users are aware of the library system. It helps the library generate resources. GNIMS Library is effectively adopting all these marketing techniques thereby building positive image for users, college management, and library staff. All above marketing techniques implemented at the right time and in a right way definitely prove as a fruitful exercise for all the stakeholders of the library. It helps the library for image building. It will generate more resources for the library as management is more co-operative to the library. The staff of the library is more motivated and enthusiastic to implement new changes and they will enjoy their work. Users i.e. students are more satisfied as they know strength and weaknesses of the library. They use the strength for their betterment and help the library to overcome the weaknesses.

8. REFERENCES

[1]. Asghar, M.-B., & Bhatti, R. 2012. Marketing of Library and Information Services and Products: Right Service to the right User. Saarbrücken: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing.

[2]. Final _Approval Process Handbook 2017-18.pdf. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.aicte-india.org/downloads/Final%20_Approval%20Process%20Handbook%202017-18.pdf

[3]. Fisher, P. H., & Pride, M. M. 2009. Blueprint for Your Library Marketing Plan. Chicago, Ill: Amer Library Assn Editions.

[4]. Madhusudhan, M. 2008. Marketing of Library and Information Services and Products in

[5]. University Libraries: A Case Study of Goa University Library. Library Philosophy and Practice, March 2008, Paper 175. http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1178&context=libphilprac

[6]. Muema Kavulya, J. 2004. "Marketing of library services: a case study of selected university libraries in Kenya". Library Management, 25(3), 118–126. https://doi.org/10.1108/01435120410522334

[7]. Prasher, R. 2017. "Marketing of Services of Private B Schools". S.l.: Bookwell Publications.

[8]. Shandil, R. K. 2002. "Re _engineering management education in India" University. Retrieved from http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/10603/121111

[9]. Thompson, M. S., & Schott, L. 2007. "Marketing to Community College Users". The Serials Librarian, 53(3), 57–76. https://doi.org/10.1300/J123v53n03_05