



Marketing Of Information Products And Services Among University Librarians In University Libraries Andhra Pradesh

G.Gopal

Research Scholar
Dept. of Library & Inf science
S.V.University,
Tirupati-517502.

Dr. M.Prasantha Kumari

Associate Professor
Dept. of Library & Inf science
S.V.University
Tirupati-517502

Abstract: The study canvassed for the concept of marketing of library products and services among librarians in University Librarians of Andhra Pradesh. This study investigated the existence of the concept of marketing in selected University Librarians libraries as well as the benefits derived from marketing of library products and services. The study which was administered to 5 librarians in five University Libraries of Andhra Pradesh. librarians responded.

Keywords: Marketing of Information services, Marketing Strategies, Library Products and Services, University Libraries and Librarians.

1. Introduction

In today's complex information environment, libraries and librarians have a responsibility to effectively communicate the resources and expertise they provide, both within their campuses and to society at large. University libraries are often described as the heart or nerve centres of their parent institutions, as they are central to the academic and research activities of universities. However, libraries are no longer the sole choice for students, faculty, staff, and other users to access information, largely due to rapid advances in information and communication technologies.

The impact of emerging technologies and changing environmental factors has significantly transformed the role and concept of library services. An increasing range of services is now delivered beyond the physical boundaries of the library through digital platforms and networked systems. In order to remain relevant and viable in this dynamic environment, libraries and information services must adopt appropriate marketing strategies that align with their organizational mission, goals, and objectives. A high-tech library without a marketing orientation may not necessarily succeed. In an increasingly competitive information landscape, marketing has become a critical factor for the survival of libraries.

A library without users is essentially ineffective; therefore, it is crucial to create awareness among users about the benefits of library resources and services. To attract clients, generate awareness among non-

users, and enhance the visibility of available services and resources, libraries must actively promote their offerings in the most effective manner possible. Promotional activities serve to communicate the availability and value of library services to target user groups and should be designed to motivate both users and non-users to engage with the library.

2. Objectives

The main objective of this study is to investigate the marketing of library and information services in University Libraries in Andhra Pradesh. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. determine the need for marketing library and information services in university libraries in Andhra Pradesh;
2. identify the current techniques employed by university libraries in the marketing of library and information services;
3. examine the competencies required of librarians for effective marketing of library and information services;
4. determine the challenges faced by librarians in the marketing of library and information services in Andhra Pradesh; and
5. examine strategies for enhancing the marketing of library and information services in Andhra Pradesh.

3. Literature Review

Kutu and Olabode (2018). examined the marketing of information products and services in public libraries in South West Nigeria. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to library professionals and library officers. Out of 130 questionnaires distributed, 120 completed responses were received and analysed. The study covered the State Library Boards of six states in South West Nigeria, and responses were obtained from respondents holding five different designations. The study analysed the distribution of various pricing models adopted by the libraries, examined the pricing strategies in use, and identified different marketing management strategies implemented by the libraries. The findings revealed that although marketing activities in public libraries were largely unplanned, a conducive environment existed for carrying out promotional activities.

Siva (2020). in his doctoral thesis, conducted an empirical study on the marketing of information products and services in the digital environment, focusing on Central University Libraries in India. Data for the study were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals working in 47 Central Universities across the country. A total of 460 questionnaires were distributed, of which 373 valid responses were received. The study assessed the marketing of information products and services based on four key attributes, namely attitude, marketing mix, web marketing, and the impact of LIS services. The findings revealed an overall positive response from LIS professionals towards the marketing of information products and services in the digital environment.

Thabit and Manaf (2018) investigate the role of marketing mix elements (product, price, place and promotion) in improving product promotion effectiveness and reducing organizational challenges. The important findings of this study can be stated as follows: 1. In terms of increasing product sales, the campaign has a significant influence. 2. Product distribution has the potential to improve customer happiness. 3. The company's marketing strategy has a significant impact on increasing product sales.

4. Need for Marketing of Library and Information Services

Librarianship is undergoing rapid transformation, and numerous factors are reshaping the traditional roles of libraries. As a result, librarians and information professionals are increasingly compelled to understand and apply marketing principles in their operations. The marketing of library and information services has emerged as an important and integral area of modern library management.

Several challenges have necessitated the adoption of marketing strategies in libraries and information centres. These include persistent budgetary constraints, a growing and diverse user base, the rapid explosion of information resources, rising operational and acquisition costs, increased networking and technological demands, competition from commercial database vendors, and the growing complexity of users' information needs. Collectively, these factors are forcing librarians to adopt marketing practices as a means of improving the management, visibility, and effective delivery of library and information services.

5. Library and Information Services for Marketing

With the impact of technological advancements and other environmental changes, the role and concept of library services are undergoing rapid transformation. The range of services delivered beyond the physical walls of the library has expanded significantly due to new technologies and is expected to continue growing. Moreover, the scope of certain library services has become almost limitless, as some services can now be provided as easily across the globe as within a local community. Consequently, libraries now serve, and will continue to serve, users far beyond their physical locations.

From a managerial perspective, all library activities can be viewed through a marketing lens. The concept of library services and values may be defined in multiple ways: value for users in terms of the level of support and quality of services provided; value for the parent institution through contributions to institutional missions and goals; and economic value in terms of return on investment. To remain relevant to the communities they serve, academic libraries must place significant emphasis on understanding and incorporating users' perspectives into service design and delivery (Rocio, Lotero & Rua, 1987, as cited in Namugera, 2014).

According to Oni, as cited in Oguntuase (2015), the following services are common to most libraries and are particularly relevant for marketing purposes:

❖ **Reading and Lending Services:** Registered library members are entitled to read and borrow books from the library. The circulation unit facilitates borrowing and returning of materials, user registration, and responds to enquiries related to library use.

❖ **Reservation Services:** Materials that are in high demand are reserved for use within the library and may be borrowed on a limited-time basis, often for two hours per day. Users are required to sign for these materials before use.

❖ **Reference Services:** The reference section provides specialized assistance to users through the reader services division. Reference services are a core function of libraries, where reference librarians interact with users to identify and resolve their information needs.

❖ **User Education:** This service enables users to effectively utilize available library resources. Users are introduced to various information sources within and outside the institution through orientation programmes and instructional sessions.

❖ **Exhibitions and Displays:** Exhibitions and displays are used to promote library services and resources. Newly acquired books and other materials are displayed to attract users' attention before being shelved.

6. Competencies Required for Librarians in the Marketing of Library and Information Services

The rapid development and expansion of the information society have significantly altered the traditional roles of librarians, presenting new challenges in areas such as data management, information storage, and digital preservation. The volume of available information has increased dramatically, necessitating that the new generation of librarians acquire diverse skills and competencies to effectively manage and disseminate information in multiple formats (Researchers' Use of Academic Libraries and their Services, 2007).

Marketing of library and information services focuses on enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of services delivered to users. Successful marketing therefore requires librarians to possess specific competencies and professional attributes. According to Chandra (2011), competency refers to the characteristics of individuals that influence their performance and behaviour in the workplace. In this context, staff competency has a significant impact on the marketing of library and information services in the following ways:

- promoting transparency and dynamism in library administration;
- fostering closer and more positive relationships with users and stakeholders;
- encouraging innovation in library and information services;
- supporting organizational growth and development;
- ensuring the delivery of quality-based library and information services;
- enhancing effective teamwork among library staff;
- building self-confidence among library professionals;
- promoting flexibility and adaptability in professional attitudes; and
- strengthening interpersonal relationships.

7. Techniques in the Marketing of Library Services

Marketing plays a crucial role in sustaining effective relationships between libraries and their users and should be regarded as equally important as the services provided by university libraries. At its core, marketing involves identifying users' needs and developing appropriate strategies and services to reach and satisfy them. The application of marketing strategies is influenced by several factors, including market

conditions, user demand, and available budget. To achieve desired outcomes, libraries must make strategic decisions regarding their marketing activities.

Libraries offer a wide range of products and services that can be marketed; therefore, each library must clearly identify what it intends to market and the most effective means of doing so. Marketing is not limited to the development and promotion of new services and products but also involves creating awareness of existing services and evaluating their relevance and suitability to users. A well-structured marketing plan should be developed and implemented, accompanied by continuous improvement of services and products. Many libraries have increasingly recognized the value and practical application of marketing concepts in enhancing service delivery (Chandratre & Chandratre, 2015).

Sharma and Bhardwaj (2009), as cited in Odine (2011), suggested several techniques for marketing library services, including:

- **Creation of a Library Web Page:** Libraries should develop and maintain dedicated web pages to promote information resources and services. A library website is an effective tool for communicating available services and facilitating access to resources.
- **Use of Email Communication:** Emails can be sent to users to inform them about newly acquired resources, subscribed databases, and provide guidance on information search strategies.
- **Participation in Academic Activities:** Librarians should attend academic lectures, seminars, and workshops where a large number of users are present. Such interactions enable librarians to understand users' information needs while simultaneously promoting library services.
- **Provision of Online Help Services:** Librarians should provide visible links to help and reference services on all relevant library web pages, especially at points where users are likely to require assistance.

Marketing strategy involves selecting appropriate techniques in the right proportion and balance. It is important to recognize that not all libraries can afford or effectively utilize every marketing technique, as different situations require different approaches. Therefore, librarians and information managers must be knowledgeable about a range of marketing techniques and be able to select those most suitable for specific services, products, and contexts. Successful marketing thus depends on the ability to strategically choose and apply the most effective techniques under varying circumstances.

8. **METHODOLOGY** This research study is of the survey research design. The target population for the study comprises of all librarians in university libraries in Andhra Pradesh. Six five university libraries were selected based on proximity to researchers. There are a total of (10) librarians in the Six (6) selected university libraries. A questionnaire was developed and used for data collection.

9. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

9.1. Establishment of the Universities

The librarians of university libraries were asked to mention the year of establishment of their respective universities. Their responses are shown in table: 9.1.

S.NO	University Name	Establishment
1	Andhra University, Visakhapatnam	1926
2	Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati.	1954
3	Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur.	1976
4	Sri krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur	1981
5	Sri Padmavathi Mahila Viswavidyalayam, Tirupati	1983

Andhra University, established in **1926**, is recognized as the oldest university in the Andhra Pradesh region. The period between 1926 and 1983 saw the founding of several other state universities in the area. For example, Sri Padmavathi Mahila Viswavidyalayam in Tirupati was established in **1983** as a dedicated women's university. All these institutions are classified as state universities operating within Andhra Pradesh.

9.2. Library Staff

The short of staff in the library is also a constrain to acquire the skills. Due to this reason, most of the library professionals are not able to any skill development programmes in the field of library technology, hence the constraints that are being faced to acquire the skills short of library professionals working in the University libraries in Andhra Pradesh.

Library Staff	Librarian	Asst. Librarians	Lib. Assistants	Supporting Staff	Total
Andhra University	1	-	-	14	15
Sri Venkateswara University	1	-	2	10	13
Acharya Nagarjuna University	1	-	3	17	21
Sri krishnadevaraya University	-	1	7	04	12
Sri Padmavathi Mahila Viswavidyalayam	-	-	1	12	15

The nature of the library staff strength of university libraries is presented in the table-9.2. It is observed from the table that nearly 17 professional staff is Library Professionals working in the librarians at present and work. 57 Non-Professionals supporting staff in libraries.

9.3. Annual Budget in books (Rs. In Lakhs in the 2015-2020)

Library budget is an important factor for the library for survival and development so it was essential to know the library budget. A question has been put to the libraries to know total Annual budget of various university libraries during the 2015 to 2020. The responses made by them are show in table 9.3.

TABLE 9.3:
ANNUAL BUDGET PROVISIONS OF LIBRARIES UNDER STUDY

ANNUAL BUDGET	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-2020
Andhra University	25 lakhs	30 lakhs	45 lakhs	50 lakhs	75 lakhs
Sri Venkateswara University	10 lakhs	15 lakhs	50 lakhs	50 lakhs	50 lakhs
Acharya Nagarjuna University	15.4 lakhs	18.4 lakhs	10.7 lakhs	10.2 lakhs	8.9 lakhs
Sri Krishnadevaraya University	12.4 lakhs	14.8 lakhs	16.4 lakhs	28.6 lakhs	42.5 lakhs
Sri PadmavathiMahilaViswavidyalayam	9.4 lakhs	18 lakhs	7.8 lakhs	13 lakhs	11 lakhs

It is evident from table-9.3 that there is no consistent increase in the budget allotted for various items of selected universities. On an average more budget (Rs. 75 lakhs) is allotted to Andhra University library, Followed by Sri Venkateswara University library is (Rs. 50 lakhs), Sri Krishnadevaraya University library (Rs. 42.5 lakhs), Acharya Nagarjuna University Library is (18.4 lakhs) and Sri Padmavati Mahila Viswavidyalayam (Rs. 18 lakhs). Andhra University On an average, budget of Rs **40.10 lakhs** is allotted for every financial year **(2015-16 to 2019-2020)**. Through the University Libraries is getting less budget compared to other Universities.

9.4. Library Collection

A library is a store house of knowledge and information. Its collections are in the form of books, journals, reports, thesis/dissertations, maps/atlas, etc. including audio-visual materials.

Library Collection	AU	SVU	ANU	SKU	SPW
Books	5,36,635	3,93,532	1,55,387	1,63,409	93000
Theses/Dissertations	9529	5384	6227	3444	1042
Manuscripts	2663	-	-	-	-
Conference Proceedings	436	312	234	190	98
Reference Books	12000	11786	8000	10,000	4500
Print journals	436	250	153	190	104
News Papers	15	14	15	12	10
e-journals	9000+	7500+	6000+	5500+	5000+
CD-ROMs	880	750	471	350	300

It is evident from Table 9.4 that AU possesses the largest collection across most categories, particularly in terms of Books, Theses/Dissertations, Manuscripts, and e-journals. SVU holds the second-largest collection of books and also records the highest number of Reference Books (11,786), assuming that

the figure 4,500 is not associated with this category or has been reported separately. In contrast, SPW generally maintains the smallest collection across most of the categories listed. Notably, Manuscripts are reported only in the case of AU. The presence of an additional numerical entry (4,500) without a clearly identified category indicates a possible inconsistency or formatting error in the table, which requires clarification.

9.5. Use Of Marketing of Library and LIS Information Products Available in University Libraries Under Study

Marketing of Library and LIS Information Products Available in University Libraries Under Study	AU	SVU	ANU	SKU	SPW
Information contacts	√	√	√	√	√
Personal contacts	√	√	√	√	√
Demonstration(Online/CD-Rom/TEXINCON, Database during exhibitions)	√	√	√	√	√
Exhibitions/exhibition cum sale	√	√	√	√	√
Brochure/pamphlets to target users	√	√	√	√	√
Users group meet	√	√	√	-	-
Direct mail	√	√	√	-	-
Review of information products in national/international journals	√	√	√	-	√
Annual report and house magazine	√	√	√	-	√
Advertising	AU	SVU	ANU	SKU	SPW
Display of new arrivals	√	√	√	√	√
Exhibitions	√	√	√	-	-
Library brochure	√	√	√	√	√
Annual report	√	√	√	√	√
Percentage	100	100	86.66	53.33	66.66

Table 9.5. illustrates the extent to which various marketing techniques are adopted by the university libraries under study for promoting Library and LIS information products. It is evident that AU and SVU have adopted all the listed marketing practices, achieving 100 per cent usage, which reflects a comprehensive and proactive approach to marketing their information products and services.

ANU also shows a high level of adoption, implementing most of the marketing techniques, with an overall usage rate of 86.66 per cent. However, practices such as user group meetings, direct mail, and certain exhibition-related activities are not uniformly adopted.

In contrast, SKU demonstrates a comparatively limited adoption of marketing strategies, with an overall usage of 53.33 per cent. While basic practices such as information contacts, personal contacts, demonstrations, and advertising through displays of new arrivals and library brochures are followed, more interactive techniques like user group meetings, direct mail, exhibitions, and reviews in journals are not adopted.

SPW exhibits a moderate level of adoption, with 66.66 per cent usage. Although it employs essential marketing tools such as information contacts, demonstrations, brochures, advertising, and annual reports, it does not utilize user group meetings, direct mail, or exhibitions.

Overall, the findings reveal considerable variation in the adoption of marketing practices among the libraries, with AU and SVU emerging as leaders, while SKU and SPW lag behind in implementing diversified and user-oriented marketing strategies.

9.6. Marketing Methods Used in University Libraries Under Study

Marketing Methods Used	AU	SVU	ANU	SKU	SPW
Verbal Methods	√	√	√	√	-
Abstract Methods	√	√	-	-	-
Computer Based Methods	√	√	√	√	√
Physical Methods	-	-	√	√	√

A complete overall response of marketing methods used in university libraries of Andhra Pradesh are shown in Table.9.6. Mostly 100% used in Computer Based Methods, followed by 80% verbal method is used, 60% of the University libraries are used Physical Methods and Abstract Methods 40% used in university libraries.

Computer Based Methods are the only method used by all five institutions (AU, SVU, ANU, SKU, and SPW) followed by Verbal Methods are used by all institutions except SPW. Abstract Methods are only used by AU and SVU. Physical Methods are only used by ANU, SKU, and SPW. AU and SVU use the exact same three methods (Verbal, Abstract, and Computer Based). and ANU, SKU, and SPW use the exact same three methods (Verbal, Computer Based, and Physical), except SPW does not use Verbal Methods.

9.7. problems encountered in marketing of information services/ products in your library

problems encountered in marketing of information services/ products in your library	AU	SVU	ANU	SKU	SPW
Lack of trained staff	√	√	√	√	√
Marketing of information is not cost effective	√		√	√	√
Investment for the library is insufficient	√	√	√	-	-
Less demand for available information service/products	√	√	√	-	-

All five universities reported lack of trained staff as the major barrier to marketing. Four universities (AU, ANU, SKU, SPW) found marketing not cost-effective, while AU, SVU, and ANU cited insufficient investment and less demand as additional challenges.

Summary of findings

Based on the data presented and analysed, the findings could be summarized as follows:

- ❖ Andhra University, established in **1926**, is recognized as the oldest university in the Andhra Pradesh region. The period between 1926 and 1983 saw the founding of several other state universities in the area.
- ❖ the table that nearly 17 professional staff is Library Professionals working in the librarians at present and work. 57 Non-Professionals supporting staff in libraries.
- ❖ On an average more budget (Rs. 75 lakhs) is allotted to Andhra University library, Followed by Sri Venkateswara University library is (Rs. 50 lakhs), Sri Krishnadevaraya University library (Rs. 42.5 lakhs), Acharya Nagarjuna University Library is (18.4 lakhs) and Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam (Rs. 18 lakhs). Andhra University On an average, budget of **Rs40.10 lakhs** is allotted for every financial year (**2015-16 to 2019-2020**). Through the University Libraries is getting less budget compared to other Universities.
- ❖ AU possesses the largest collection across most categories, particularly in terms of Books, Theses/Dissertations, Manuscripts, and e-journals. SVU holds the second-largest collection of books and also records the highest number of Reference Books (11,786), assuming that the figure 4,500 is not associated with this category or has been reported separately.
- ❖ various marketing techniques are adopted by the university libraries under study for promoting Library and LIS information products. It is evident that AU and SVU have adopted all the listed marketing practices, achieving 100 per cent usage, which reflects a comprehensive and proactive approach to marketing their information products and services.
- ❖ Mostly 100% used in Computer Based Methods, followed by 80% verbal method is used, 60% of the University libraries are used Physical Methods and Abstract Methods 40% used in university libraries.
- ❖ All five universities reported lack of trained staff as the major barrier to marketing. Four universities (AU, ANU, SKU, SPW) found marketing not cost-effective, while AU, SVU, and ANU cited insufficient investment and less demand as additional challenges.

Conclusion: Libraries are effectively characterized as "information markets," and their patrons are seen as "consumers of information. The increasing reliance on information in various fields has driven the creation of complex information systems and diverse services/products. The core library functions of acquisition, organization, and dissemination of information should adopt **marketing principles** to effectively ensure user satisfaction.

References

1. Adekunmisi, S. R. (2013). Strategies for Marketing Library Services and Information Products in Nigeria. *Global Advanced Research Journal of Educational Research and Review*, (ISSN: 2315-5132) 2 (12): 240 – 245.
2. Aderibigbe, O. A. and Farouk, B. L. (2017) Challenges on Marketing of Information Resources and Services in Federal University Libraries in North-West Zone of Nigeria. *International Journal of Academic Library and Information Science* Vol. 5(3), pp. 92-96.
3. Baro, E.E. and Ebhomeya, L. (2013) Marketing the Library Resources and Services to Users: A Survey of Twenty Two University Libraries in Nigeria. *Information Impact: Journal of Information and Knowledge Management*. 4 (1) 44-63.
4. Gupta, D. K. and Savard R. (2010) Marketing Library and Information Services Encyclopedia of Library and Information Sciences.
5. Jestin, Joseph and Parameswari, B.(2005). Marketing of information products and services for libraries in India. *Library Philosophy and Practice*,5(1).
6. Jestin, K. J. and Parameswari, B. (2002). Marketing of Information Products and Services for Libraries in India. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 5 (1): 1 – 5.
7. Kaur, Amritpal and Sarita Rani.(2007). Marketing of information services and products in university libraries of Punjab and Chandigarh (India): An exploratory study.” *Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship*,8(3).
8. Kutu, J. O., & Olabode, O. (2018). Marketing of Information Products and services in public libraries in South West, Nigeria. *International Journal of Library and Information Science*, 10(6), 54–61
9. Madhusadhan, H. (2008). Marketing of libraries and information services and products in university libraries: A case study of GOA university library. *Library Philosophy and practice*, 5(1) 56-60.
10. Mahesh, G. (2003) “Barriers to marketing of information products and services in libraries”, *DESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology*, 22(3) 35-38.
11. Mathews, Brian (2009). *Marketing today’s academic library: a bold new approach to communicating with students*. Chicago: American Library Association.
12. Siva, B. (2020). Marketing of Information Products and Services in the Digital environment An empirical study among Central University Libraries in India (Thesis). Retrieved from <https://shodhganga.in>.
13. Thabit, T., & Raewf, M. (2018). The evaluation of marketing mix elements: A case study. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies*, 4(4), 100- 109.