An approach to marketing in special and academic libraries of Sri Lanka: a survey with emphasis on services provided to the clientele.

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Abstract

The concept of marketing covers not only the buying and selling for financial gain, but also the achievement of organizational objectives successfully. Thus the term 'marketing' has a wider and deeper sense, which proliferates the organization's successive achievements. Modern marketing is applied not only to the profit making organizations, but also to the non-profit sector and social service organizations like libraries. Marketing in the library service sector intends the performances of planning, organizing, dissemination and controlling of information services on a proactive and user oriented way that ensures the user satisfaction while achieving the objectives of the parent organization. Information services system of Sri Lanka incorporates mainly the various library systems like academic libraries, special libraries, public libraries, school libraries and other information centers. Parent organizations of the libraries spend a large amount of money for their library activities. However, due to many reasons, most of these libraries seem to be under-utilized and have failed to satisfy the information needs of their users. One reason for this is considered to be the lack of marketing in their activities. Having no proper planning, the majority of libraries and information centers seem to be conventional, supply-led, and isolated in their service provision. Library personnel have not properly understood potential opportunities of their library business. They are less aware of their challenges and are not prepared to win the competitive advantages in the market. This study attempted to understand the present attitude to marketing in special libraries and academic libraries of Sri Lanka. Here the basic marketing performances of above libraries were examined. Focus was given on the investigation of the understanding of markets/potential markets, planning targeted services to accurate market segments, identification of competitive advantages, the application of marketing mixes (4Ps) etc. to libraries. It is also aimed at identifying the problems encountered in marketing of library and information services. Two tentative hypotheses were tested in the investigation.

The sample survey technique, which involved an exploratory analysis of primary data related to the problem, was utilized as the methodology for the study. Structured written questionnaires were the main instruments used for the gathering of data from samples. 33 out of 50 special libraries and 20 out of 22 academic libraries responded to the questionnaire.

Data analysis was completed with quantitative means such as percentage analysis, arithmetic mean analysis and qualitative descriptions using graphical presentation wherever needed.

Hypotheses were proved with findings. Special libraries and academic libraries of Sri Lanka have a sufficient amount of resources acquired and market opportunities available. Yet, they practice poor marketing. In comparison, marketing performances are more available in special libraries than in academic libraries. Special libraries and academic libraries of Sri Lanka have cost recovery capabilities and even profit potentials from their services if they undertake proper marketing. Library personnel had very little knowledge of marketing principles. Lack of trained staff; poor library investments (allocations), insufficient technology and know-how etc. are identified as problems that hinder the practice of marketing. More research studies should be implemented in the field.

Introduction

Marketing principles and strategies are used not only in the profit making business sector, but also in the non-profit/services such as hospitals, libraries, and postal services with some adjustments to suit for the non-profit sector. For a fact, in the library sector, the aim of the service should be the fulfillment of objectives rather than earning a financial profit. Library's main concern would be the user satisfaction while financial profit also can be obtained by charging membership fees, fines for overdue

books, photocopying services, online searching and other fee-based services. Therefore, the concept of marketing is not strange for the library organization.

Marketing in its rapid development has widened its meaning and scope to cover a larger sense with a wider course of activity. On the other hand as the transition of the economy from industry based socio-economy to information-based economy (*that is the information* age) the importance of information has been highly increased; and the term marketing has been dramatically expanded to the library & information sector. Now it is the ***Information age*** where information has become a daily need, as productive good to tailor consumer/client needs. Success of any activity - social, cultural, political or economic in the modern human life, is based on the amount and accuracy of information available. Managers make decisions with the information available at hand. Education always incorporates with information or knowledge obtained. Therefore, information is a commodity or economic good of worldwide significance, which contributes directly or indirectly to the National Economy. Information has become a valuable commodity that people tend to buy for their needs. The criteria to determine the power in the society has shifted from the industry-ownership to the information ownership where as the global economy shifted from industry-based economy to information based one. Consequently, information is subjected to measure and valued by economic theory causing the manipulation of various information businesses. Various value systems for information have been introduced and information now could be sold, exchanged, lent, transmitted and dominated with a financial context.

Proliferation of modern technology has also enhanced the explosion of information where it helps to create, store, retrieve, repackage and disseminate information in due needs. Information technology has created a new gateway for information services. Specially, the emergence of the microcomputer has introduced various information products and services in a multiplicity of formats to the library. "Libraries as institutions are being subjected to significant pressures from the information revolution: new computers, the rapid growth of material, rising costs, revised requirements for professional training, networking demands, fee systems are always are all issues currently faced by library managers." (Pringgoadisurjo Luwarsnin, 1991, p.78).
Innovative information technology has ensured the diversity of information products and now multi-media technology can facilitate the information transfer with text, sound, graphic, drawings, fixed images or even animation. Various computerized databases are made available at information centers and the demand for knowledge-based products are increasing rapidly. This demand has made a great impact on libraries compelling them to find ways and strategies to fulfill the increasing user needs as libraries can not deny their services in spite of difficulties such as financial constraints, staff shortage, and budgetary controls and the decline of purchasing capacity.
"Librarians in the long history of computer literacy, expertise, information retrieval, experience with in-house and out reach activities, and strong service orientation place them in an excellent position to comply with new mandates. All that is needed is reaffirmation of information's tremendous value to all sectors of the community and an understanding of the marketing process"(Lemkan, L. Hendry & others 1985, p.144).

Libraries are becoming obsolescence owing to poor approach of modern marketing strategies. New business information enterprises have emerged to challenge and compete with libraries. Therefore, in order to survive and surpass other competitors, libraries must have to follow modern marketing principles. "While libraries have been closing or struggling to stay afloat enterprising companies have begun to discover the commercial potential of what we do, and are competing with us to sell much of the information the public has declined to pay for through taxes. (Coffman Stephan, 1995)

> "Survival of a library depends among other thing on its image in the minds of the users and the fund allocators. This image should be the outcome of the quality and effectiveness of the services, the ability to anticipate the desires and requirements of actual and potential users and their fulfillment. Marketing is the instrument through which these library objectives can be fulfilled" (Narayana G.J.1991, p.187)."There is increasing competition for libraries as the commercial sector began to recognize the profit potential of the information super highway" (Coffman Stephan, 1995, p.167).

Marketing is also essential for the library as an instrument of achieving its objectives. Libraries need to find more allocations to cover their expenses in a competitive environment. Therefore, they attempt to levy for information through membership fees, taxes, charging for the document delivery and online searching etc. Various fee-based services were introduced to the library with the purpose of cost recovery and revenue earning. Libraries now make charges either for general use of the library or for the specific services provided to the customer. Any or all services provided by the library are possible to be marketed. For instance, lending services, Inter Library Loans, online searching services, home-bound-readers services, picture loans, consultancy services, provision of affinity products (such as publications, badges, posters, books, maps, photographs), the organization (library) as an entity, and people (library staff) can be based on the revenue earning process. Even the access to updated information will itself be a marketable good. Some libraries and information professionals seek the possibility of making profit on in formation services though concept of information marketing does not necessarily mean a financial profit.

Early libraries seemed to be 'product-oriented' which were based on the *supply-led concept* - that is the production or decisions were made with out concentrating particular regard to customer requirement. Yet modern libraries are becoming *proactive* and *customer-oriented* tending to define the market before designing the products and services.

Market for the library and information services is immense and wide with diversity of attributes. Due to the development of new technology and worldwide business capability, demand for information is widely increasing. Modern man requires much information for his sophisticated lifestyle. More business news is required with economic liberalization, and the global-wide entrepreneurship. Library has a great role to play in the provision of current, updated, and rapid information for this demand.

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Studies on marketing of information services are very rare in Sri Lanka due to unawareness of the field. It is also true that library personnel are deficient in their knowledge in this regard with the lack of know-how. However, researches and studies, which cause to uplift and develop the marketing of libraries in the country, are essential to conduct.

Although, the concept of information marketing is new as a discipline for Sri Lanka, librarians and information professionals through a long history have consciously or unconsciously practiced marketing strategies at their work. For example, some academic libraries seem to undertake user surveys, user education and awareness programmes, targeting particular user segments. Similarly, these are the strategies, which exist now as the advertising, market researches, and market segmentation in general marketing

A major portion of information demand in Sri Lanka seems to occur in fields of education, research, and industry while a small part of the market contributes to the community information and recreational information requirements.

This study aimed to examine the nature of marketing of information in special and academic libraries of the country. Especially attention was made to understand how libraries provide their services and products to existing users as well as how they attempted to market their services to potential users. Here strategies used by these library professionals were concerned on the basis of common marketing principals at the outset.

Libraries or information centers established under academic institutions, government departments, statutory boards and local government bodies were the main information providers in Sri Lanka. All these libraries seemed to spend an enormous amount of money on the purchasing and acquisition of resources: printed publications, electronic information sources, and other library materials. For example, a university library in the country generally allocates around ten million rupees per year.

These libraries spend a large amount of money on the purchasing of resources, training of manpower and for the provision of services. But it should be investigated whether the resources available in the library are properly used and whether the library can rationalize its expenditure matching the information supply and user demand.

Public libraries in the country seem to be under utilized and a major portion of their user population visits the library for leisure reading or for the reading of newspapers. In the school library system only a few libraries function well and reading habits and library use among school children seems to be very poor.

Special libraries and academic libraries play a great role in provision of information for researchers, scholars, students and academic and non-academic staff of the institution. Services provided by these libraries are numerous and annual allocations for them are high. Their acquired of resource collections are immense. But the problem apparent is that most of these libraries are under utilized. On most occasions, university students use the library for note reading during examinations They seem to do a little use of the library during other times. Similarly, some students do not have any knowledge of the services available in the library and some students do not show any interest for the library.

Hence, both students and staff are unaware of the resources and potential use of the library which can contribute to their educational and professional fulfillment. Many of

special libraries seem to be used by a limited number of users due to unawareness of available services. Simply, there are more non-users than actual users of these libraries. Some special libraries just provide books for leisure reading, and provide photocopies of journal articles rather than organizing targeted information services to fulfill the needs of users respect to the parent institution

There are several reasons for this under-utilization. One main reason is that the library does poor marketing. Library's promotional activities such as user education, current awareness, and advertising etc. seem to be insufficient. Less concentration has been made on strategies such as customer care, personal relationship, and publicity.

Application of marketing to the library

Generally overall marketing concept is based on Marketing Mix concept. There are four marketing mixes namely product mix, price mix, place mix and promotion mix. Therefore, any marketer in the information business should have to have a brief understanding of marketing mixes and their application to the library.

Products of the library business

"Products and services which provide benefits for users and which answer users' most important needs are the core business of the library and information service"(Aze de Elliot E.1985, p.5). These products appear as a response to user priorities in the form of commercial intelligence, educational, leisure, recreational or social information. All of the services offered by the library: lending services, inter library loan, on-line searching, house-bound-readers services, picture loans etc. are library's products that can be marketed successfully. Product concept in the information sector is spread out over three levels; core level, tangible level, and augmented level. Library can provide bibliographic information, abstracts and summaries of information, which disseminate the core level information. Books, databases, journals, bulletins, etc. represent the tangible information. Library can also augment information through quality, reliable, speedy and timely professional services. Weingand Darlene E (1995) negates that the library's product can be arranged within a three dimensional structure of the product mix, product line, and product item (p.307). Under the product mix 'collection' of the library represents as a product line. Product items include books, periodicals, videos, films, audio recordings etc. For another fact, services of the library can be considered as a product line and the circulation of library materials, ILL, reference services, and on-line searching represent as product items. 'Programmes' of the library would be another product line where product items comprise of bibliographic instructions, displays, and lectures

Products, while they vary according to the scope and objectives of the library, can be identified in physical forms and intangible forms.

Library purchases readily available materials to build up a well balanced and comprehensive resource collection for users. The collection constitutes books, periodicals, microform publications, manuscripts, research papers, and non-book materials (audio cassettes, filmstrips, slides, and audio/visuals). These are not the library's real products, but the resource collection is the raw material for products.

Library produces paper media products such as acquisition lists, bibliographies, printed indexes, directories, news letters, reviews, content page bulletins, chapter headings etc. in order to provide quick information to users. Catalogues are established to facilitate users access the collection easily and obtain desired bibliographic information quickly.

Electronic media products include databanks prepared by the library itself or bought from another database vendor. Databases are searched through online or CD ROM versions. Databases provide various levels of information, full text, abstracts, or bibliographic.

Users can borrow library materials for a period of time depending upon their membership type. Institutional membership facilitates the maximum utility of materials to a number of users at a time. Reservation facilities are provided under special programmes.

Reference services are available for users who wish to obtain information by self-searching, and/or with the staff help. Ready reference sources like encyclopedias; dictionaries, directories, thesaurus etc. are made available for self-searching. The staff replies to user queries using these reference sources.

Resource sharing programme of the library includes Inter Library Loans (ILL) and Reciprocal borrowing. Photocopies of journal articles/chapters of books etc. are provided through ILL. Under the Reciprocal Borrowing Programme, library holding the responsibility for the resource, facilitates users to borrow the desired library materials from another library.

Research and Consultations services are conducted for users who seek for the assistance from the library. Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) services are launched with the utility of user profiles for individuals, or for groups relying on their interests. Relevant information packages are distributed to them.

Document delivery service undertakes the provision of photocopies, and duplicating facilities to the user. Documents are also delivered via E-mail, Fax, and computer printouts or by downloading.

Librarians are involved in the reproducing and repackaging of information for target user groups. Information bulletins, content page sets, newspaper clippings, news digests, digests for journal articles, abstracts, translations of articles in local languages etc. are provided to the user. Community information services involve the provision of day-to-day information to the user. Information related to vocational development, agriculture, economy, marketing, political events, know how, and entertainment etc. required for the day-to-day life are also provided.

Library's building space, reading rooms, furniture and other equipment are arranged conveniently for users. Various software and hardware for the computer can provide a friendly interface for users. Accessible terminals are also provided to the user. Application software can be provided to the members of the library. Here the library can purchase the license copy of the software from the dealer and can become an agent for the provision of copies. Library can also deal as an Internet connection provider and network coordinator.

Like the product of business industries, library's products also pass through a life cycle. The life cycle concentrates on the changes of demand through the lifetime of the product. This refers to different levels of market acceptance of the product. The first phase is the introduction phase at which the product is unknown to the public. Special offers should be made to advertise and commercialize it.

The second stage refers to the growth phase. During this stage the product achieves a wider distribution as a consequence of publicity and promotion and also encounter competition from other similar products. During the third level, the product becomes stable in the market opportunity and reaches the stage of maturity. In the maturity phase the product earns maximum profit/market share or the utility and are characterized by price warns which help to lower the price for the use. Product passes through the decline phase due to rival products, changes in the customer preferences, and the change of fashion. When the old product has declined, library must introduce new products designed to reach a profitable component of the market.

Pricing of Library products

Most of traditional librarians believed that the price for library services was irrelevant. Library services were considered free until recent and now librarians have understood the price potential of services provided by the library. "The fact that most library services are free obscures the importance of price in service planning" (Ritche Seila 1982, p.19). "Most traditional librarians believed that the price was irrelevant for library services. However, librarians recently came to know library's price potentials with the practice of charging fees for online searching, inter library loans, and photocopies. Price is not always concerned in monitory terms, but ones associated with time effort, and psyche" (Bell Ann Jo 1985, p.140). Pricing is one of the most difficult disciplines in any marketing exercise. For an information services there are added complications - the price of any service delivered is not generally paid directly by the user in relation to any one transaction." (Offor Colin, 1993, p.66)

Librarians should consider the 'monetary price' concept as well as the 'social price' concept when the price is decided for library products. In calculation of monetary price, factors such as size of the demand, cost for the product, and the impact of the competition must be taken into account. Real value of the product can be ascertained by the practice of cost analysis. Costing is important even when a service is provided free of charge. White Martin (1981) identifies a number of pricing policies for the information sector: Lost leadership, Offset, subscription, deposit, discount, guarantee, and constant prices. Loss leaders policy involves the setting up of a lower price below the real cost in order to get new business. Library spends for the acquisition of more valuable library materials, but does not change the membership fees for that reason. In the Offset pricing strategy a basic or initial price is quoted with extra costs added on at a later stage. Current awareness services may have a search through online for which is charged separately. By this policy client is controlled by the cost for the search. Subscription strategy makes the client pay a regular amount of fee on a discount rate or not for the service rendered. The client can obtain the membership for bulletin boards, SDI services etc. under this method. On the deposit pricing system, client is requested to pay a deposit, and product/services are provided debiting against the deposit. The deposit is topped up from time to time. Online searching, E-mail, fax etc. can be handled by this means in the library. Discount tactic can be used to encourage members to use more services e.g. library's permanent members are provided special discount to search online and CD-ROM. First half an hour can be provided free of charge if a person searches the online more than three hours.

Guarantee method is more practicable for high cost services because guarantee can ensure the reliability of the product. The library provides a guarantee on consultancy services ensuring that the consultancy report is potential to enhance the client's information need. Fees are not charged in failures or to resume new efforts. The danger of not meeting the agreed target is managed. Constant pricing involves the change of the price or adjusting the product quality in the competitive market. Services are reduced rather than raising the price in due occasions.

However, price of library products represents as fees for the membership, fines, photocopy/fax/downloading charges, database searching costs, subscription for services, reservation fees, and direct sales of publications etc.

Distribution of Library products

Distribution of the library's products refers to 'When' 'Where' and 'How' service is made available for the user. 'When' implies the time period in which information are provided. 'Where' indicates the location of the services and 'How' constitutes the type of distribution.

The place where the library is situated is important because, the sighting of the library can make an effect to the user

Library's location must be easily found, easily entered, and conveniently visited. Building arrangement and furniture, equipment, shelving etc. must be comfortable to the user. Library's service points are the issuing counter, catalogue, reading rooms, and computer terminals. Geographical locations comprise of branch libraries and special service points

For example, the university library establishes branch libraries in their faculties in order to overcome geographical distance from the main library. Department libraries/special collections are maintained to provide easy access. This can prevent long queues near the issuing counter. Special libraries set up separate units to provide access to desired information. Public libraries conduct mobile services.

Public libraries organize outreach services such as house bound delivery of books, mobile services, kiosks etc. Reference librarians answer user queries orally by the face-to-face contact and over the telephone or by the mail in written format. Photocopies, Fax pages, computer diskettes, and audio/video cassettes are some other means of physical distribution. Online databases through computerized networks are important channels of dissemination. Internet is a popular example. Information agents, brokers, and online hosts are considered as intermediaries of the library. Mass media like TV, Radio, newspapers, are also means of indirect distribution.

Opening days and hours are different for different libraries and it is decided considering the needs of users as well as potential users. Public libraries have wider and heterogeneous segments of the market and therefore opening hours must be convenient for the majority and should be generalized as possible as to optimize the service time.

Distribution channels of the library should ensure the quality of the service, time and convenience and format and priorities of the delivery. Factors like the nature of the output, output format, and the speed of obtaining information are important to ensure the quality.

Promotion of the library

"Library's market must be aware of the services available (and perhaps of what could be available) and should be persuaded to use them. This point may be contentious but it makes sense to fully exploit any service it has been instituted. The library as a medium for the communication of information is a failure if it cannot communicate its own potential value to its market" (Riche Sheila, 1982, p.23).

Market. The basic aim of library promotion is to select a technique which will encourage the recipient to respond either by buying or requesting further information or by filling the promotional material away for the use in the future. (White Martin 1981, p.39).

A number of viable promotional techniques are found utilized either singly or in combination in the library.

Advertising:

The purpose of advertising in the library context is to develop the awareness of users, increase the use of services, and intensify the image of the library. Advertising programmes must be designed to achieve reader's attention, arouse interest for the product, lead the user decide purchasing, and buy/use the product with a satisfaction.

Library can advertise its products through displaying, ads on in-house newsletters, local press, billboards, posters, on-screen announcements, radio, cinema advertisements, Television commercials, and networks. In-house information services are commonly used through leaflets and brochures, which are aimed at a target user group.

Public relations:

Library in the aspect of Public Relations incorporates the interaction between the library and its customers. Public relations involve the interpersonal contact, which is to develop the communication of trust, mutual respect, perception, attitude and opinion to communicate the benefit of the library and its products. This associates a wide range of practice like editorial coverage of press, publishing of in-house journals, staff magazines, newsletters, and other publications. Library's image is developed through calendars, logos, letterheads, etc. Relationship with media is an important vehicle for the publicity and library personnel can produce seasonal press releases. Media interviews, bookmarks, posters, and displays are also tools for the publicity. The library services itself is also can make publicity. Staff performances, face- to- face contact with users, and the quality and the structure of the library building are important factors.

Customer care is another tool for the promotion of the library. This implies the training of staff to take client's attention to the library. Needs are fulfilled by setting priorities than insisting to apply the rule. Customer-care deals also with complaints and, this causes the user become more loyal advocate of the service.

As another tool for promotion of the library, personal selling involves the presentation of conference papers, seminars, lectures, demonstrations, exhibitions, and other presentations. Sales force should be carefully recruited and administrated.

Library promotes its services through extension services such as library visits, ceremonies, seminars, book exhibitions, contests, rewarding functions, get-togethers, and sponsorship programmes. User education and current awareness services play the role of advertising and personal selling. Library can communicate through various modes of messaging – oral, written, electronic, or implied.

Library extension services are not purely related to the library's professional activities, but help users become loyal customers to the library. Displays of new arrivals, book reviews, and organizing of exhibitions, and book fairs are important. Library can conduct public lectures, speeches, discussions and seminars under various topics, which are believed interesting to users. In public Libraries Story hours can be set up targeting the children, blind or old aged persons and illiterate people. Library guide tours, visits, commemorations and seasonal celebrations are conducted to attract users

Apart from the above-mentioned 4Psp among marketing mix elements there are other 3Ps namely 'Process mix', 'Physical evidence mix', and 'People mix' extended in the service marketing.

Objective of the study

The main objective of this study is to understand the nature of marketing performances in academic and special libraries of Sri Lanka while attempting to provide a frame work for the promotion of cost effective services which meet the actual and potential needs of information users of the country. Following aims are concentrated to achieve the above objectives:
1. To understand the product/service potentials of special libraries and academic libraries of Sri Lanka.
2. To investigate the nature and extent of existing/potential markets for special libraries and academic libraries of Sri Lanka.
3. To determine strategies that Special libraries and Academic libraries of Sri Lanka presently use to meet competition from the market.
4. To ascertain how these libraries approach to cost recovery and profit potentials from their services
5. To investigate the extent that special libraries and academic libraries consider the distribution (Place mix) of their services.
6. To identify means that special libraries and academic libraries of Sri Lanka use to advertise/promote their services.
7. To ascertain factors that these libraries concentrate on the surveying/researching of their markets.
8. To identify problems encountered in the marketing of library and information services.
9. To compare the marketing performances in Special libraries with those of academic libraries.
10. To make suggestions and recommendations which help to strengthen the concentrated effort of library personnel for the application of marketing principles to their information services.

Methodology

   This study used the sample survey method and the descriptive analysis approach to generalize search results, which leads to draw fundamental conclusions. The exploratory

survey method was used in order to explore the nature of the existing marketing performances in the sample. Data were gathered by a structured questionnaire in June 1997, and data were ramified with a descriptive analysis method against the objectives of the study. Librarians/information officers/others who are in charge of the library/information centers provided these data. Two tentative hypotheses were tested with the analysis of data.

The population of the sample represented two categories - special library category and academic library category. 33 special libraries out of 50 had responded to the questionnaire while the academic library respondent rate was 20 out of 22. Total respondent number was 53 out of 72. Percentage of special library respondents was 66 while the academic library respondent percentage was 90.9. The total respondent rate was 73.6%.

Findings and conclusions

This study aimed to investigate the level of approach to marketing in special and academic libraries of Sri Lanka. The survey had been directed to identify and understand the basic marketing principles applied to the library activities. Marketing concept here means, not only the selling of services for the profit, but also the strategic and constructive performances of library activities for the achieving of organizational objectives successfully. Library, although as a non-profit organization encounters the possibility of cost recovery and profit potentials from their services.   Some basic factors considered in this investigation are as follows.

a. SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis activities of academic ands special of Sri Lanka

b. application of Marketing Mixes to academic ands special of Sri Lanka

c. target marketing and marketing research activities of academic ands special of Sri Lanka

d. problems hinder the library and information services marketing in Sri Lanka .

Library's strength is generally determined on the basis of its resource collection, equipment, staff, technology, know how, investment capability, and the managerial process of the library. Resource collection plays a major role because it provides raw materials for the library's production. According to this survey, special libraries and academic libraries have a satisfactory amount of resources in the collections. Availability of printed materials exceeds the amount of electronic and other information sources in these libraries. It is revealed that, although there are a good potential of new

sophisticated information sources, which have a higher possibility of services, library's main concern in given to acquire conventional library materials. Special libraries have more varieties of library materials than academic libraries have.

If the library finds more markets, which are not served by other similar organizations, it causes to create many opportunities for library business. Special libraries as well as academic libraries have shown their main concern to cater to the internal market, although they had the capability to serve external markets out side the organization. Growth of the market share and the profit from the product are very important to determine the success and cost effectiveness of the library. The survey disclosed that library personnel paid less attention on external markets, which can enhance the growth of market share. In comparison special libraries covered many market segments and had more ability to cover potential markets than academic libraries did. Academic libraries found more non-users in external market out side the institution.

Both special and academic libraries concerned very poorly on competitors who could make threats to them. Special libraries recognized their competitors than academic libraries did. However, majority of these libraries believed they had no competitors.

To win the competitive advantage, special/academic libraries attempted to strengthen their strategies while academic libraries showed more strategies than special libraries did.

Marketing mix elements, which are described as *Product, Price, Place,* and *Promotion* are important to practice in the library. The survey reveals that although libraries (special/academic) had adequate resources and sufficient markets/potential markets available, they conducted conventional information services rather than thriving to innovate diversified services in their capacity. Services available at special libraries and academic libraries were focused on the maintaining of usual services to the existing users rather than to the potential markets. Product of the library should be targeted to expressed needs as well as to the needs assumed to be required by users (unexpressed). According to the study, academic libraries have understood much more potential services (products) than that of special libraries did. Product mix is not well applied in both special libraries as well as in academic libraries.

Product planning is highly required for the marketing. Library and information service business has profit potentials. Yet, librarians seem to be still concentrate on the provision

of free services. Only a few academic/special libraries had attempted to follow even cost recovery processes from their services. In comparison, academic libraries tended to charge for their information services than special libraries did. However, special libraries had implemented more types of services based on the cost recovery process. Special/academic libraries of Sri Lanka did not have a clear pricing policy. Only a very few of these libraries have followed a comprehensive pricing procedure for their services. Majority of them had no idea of pricing. This indicates that the price mix, which is required was not sufficiently applied in special/academic libraries of Sri Lanka.

Distribution of products is a very important factor in marketing. Libraries can make use of many distribution channels. Opening days and opening hours plays a great role in the dissemination of service in libraries. This survey indicates that distribution channels of special libraries as well as of academic libraries lie on conventional and outdated methods. The majority of these libraries were kept open five working days during the week and at weekends, they tended either to limit their services for a few hours or closed the library during the whole weekend. Nevertheless, both academic libraries and special libraries extended their service hours seasonally during the examinations. In the comparison, academic libraries extended more service hours during weekends than special libraries did.

According to the survey, very poor attention has been made for the promotion of services in special/academic libraries. Majority of these libraries used general and traditional mechanisms such as current awareness activities, displays and exhibitions for the promotion of services. Attempts were not made towards the publicity on media or other modern means of communication. The study finds that many of library personnel were not aware of promotional activities, while some had no understanding of promotion and publicity for the library services. This reveals that the marketing communication is poor in special/academic libraries and therefore, Promotion mix was not applied significantly. In comparison promotional activities were seen in Special libraries than in academic libraries.

Many factors can hinder the library personnel adopt marketing principles in their works. The study found a number of problems encountered in the marketing process of library and information services. Lack of trained staff, poor investments, lack of proper

technology, and difficulty of handling effective markets in the country etc. are found as major problems.

Results of the completed study disclosed that both hypotheses were proved. Special libraries and academic libraries of Sri Lanka have sufficient amount of resources acquired, and also markets (users) *existing* as well as *potential* are available. It is revealed that marketing principles and strategies for the service of the library have poorly adopted. This can lead badly to the under-utilization of those libraries.

In comparison, special libraries relatively practice more marketing performances than academic libraries do.

Following conclusion can also be made considering survey results:

Most of library personnel have a poor knowledge on marketing principles and therefore, they are not aware of the importance of marketing in libraries. Some librarians believe that marketing is only the buying and selling of goods for a financial profit and hence, t./,hey assumed that they were not marketing their services. Reasoning the lack of understanding of the marketing process, librarians hold prejudices that they can not practice marketing in their activities. These prejudices hinder marketing in libraries. However, '*unconscious*' marketing is mostly occurs in special and academic libraries in Sri Lanka.

The library service should be based on customer orientation where customer needs are given priority when the library performs its acquisition, product planning, dissemination and handling of information services. Concepts such as 'Bench marking', teamwork process, and integration of services with other library etc. are very important to implement the library service. However, many of special libraries and academic libraries of Sri Lanka still show tendency towards product orientation.

Libraries have cost recovery and profit potentials if there services are planned and handled well.

Comprehensive strategies and effective means must be utilized in order to overcome problems encountered in marketing of library services.

As a whole, a number of weaknesses could be identified in the marketing of the library system of Sri Lanka:

a. Promotional programmes in the library are poor and limited.

b. Awareness for the potentials in case of attracting the wider information market is lacking in the library.
c. Knowledge and know-how of marketing strategies among library personnel are insufficient.
d. Services provided in the library are conventional, reactive and product oriented rather than proactive, customer oriented, innovative, and augmentative.
e. Although, libraries tend to build up a vast resource collection, they provide insufficient user oriented programmes.
f. Library personnel seem not to consider information as a marketable good, and therefore they strict to the conventional strategies and to the concept of free information service. Today's libraries have to struggle with competitors for their survival. Yet, libraries seem not to prepare for this challenge.

Suggestions

Libraries of Sri Lanka need to adopt marketing practices in order to overcome the problem of under-utilization. Following suggestions are made in general to improve marketing performances in special and academic libraries of Sri Lanka.

a. Library personnel should be made aware of the concepts and principles of modern marketing. This can be performed through the holding of workshops, seminars, short-term courses, and other related programmes on the subject.

b. Positions related to marketing management should be created in the library cadre. This post might be designated as the Assistant Librarian/Marketing, or any other position with academic/management qualifications.

c. Undergraduate and postgraduate courses on Library and Information Science should include 'Marketing' as a subject field in the curriculum.

d. Researchers and scholars should be encouraged to conduct more research studies in the field of library and information services and their marketing.

e. Library personnel must convince of the profit and cost recovery potentials from the library and information services. There are many opportunities to implement fee-based services in the library.

f. Librarians should also be made aware of competitors who can be a challenge for survival of the library. Strategies should be introduced to win the competitive advantages in the library sector.

g. Library service planning should be based on an integrated and corporate manner because, being isolated they cannot surpass or survive in the competition.

h. Libraries should take the advantage of modern information technology for the augmentation and innovation of library services significantly.

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