

**LIBRARY PROMOTION AND UTILISATION OF INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR  
ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY: A STUDY OF TWO ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN  
PLATEAU STATE.**

By

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**Abstract**

**Purpose:** The paper examined library promotion and utilisation of information resources in enhancing employability in two academic libraries in Plateau State. The study highlighted promotional strategies employed by Federal College of Education, Pankshin and University of Jos libraries. It identified the level of awareness and understanding among library staff regarding the role of utilizing information resources in enhancing employability.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Total enumeration technique was used on ninety-four (94) professional and paraprofessional librarians. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used in data analysis and presentation.

**Findings:** User survey studies, library tours, suggestion boxes, and user education were the main promotion going on. No social media library campaigns. Lack of promotion, competition from other sources, lack of ICT skills, and librarians having notion that promotion is not library work are factors hindering utilisation of resources.

**Implication:** Library promotion leads to utilisation of information resources which will promote the enhancement employability of librarians.

**Keywords:** Library promotion, academic library, utilisation of information resources, enhancement employability

**Paper Type:** Empirical research

**Introduction**

The information resources the library carefully purchases to satisfy the information needs of its users need to be promoted to the target client(s). Library information resources are

materials acquired by the library to meet the information needs of library patrons (Aladeniyi & Owokole, 2018). The materials acquired must be utilised to make the library system functional and relevant to its public. In any research institution, the library plays a pivotal role by supporting the educational, teaching, and research needs of the parent organization. "Academic libraries are libraries that are established in institutions of higher learning to support the academic activities of the parent institutions and have always been at the forefront of supporting higher institutions in the areas of teaching, learning, research, and community services, thus being the core mandates and mission of higher educational institutions" (Saka, Aliero, & Ibrahim, 2022: 288). This can be achieved by providing relevant information resources, which, if utilised, should quench the information needs of its users.

If, after acquiring these resources and users do not use them maximally, the essence of doing all these tasks is defeated. Anyanwu (2015) posits that the value of a library collection lies in its effective utilisation by the user community. The library must ensure that its resources are well utilised, which is essential for developing the users'. Deliberate efforts must be made to make these resources utilised. If resources are utilised, the library profession will be brought to the limelight because their relevance will be felt in the institution.

The library needs to be treated like a marketplace! Although promotion is not novel, to achieve better commercialization of various library information science, more purposeful exertions must be made in marketing library and information science (Rehman, 2008). Trying to marry the users for which the resources are meant needs to be carefully done, with continuous efforts put in place. Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu (2012) posit that many library users need to be

aware of the various services offered by libraries and the comfort and convenience associated with such services. The marketplace, a supply and demand meeting point, brings products and patronisers together. The library supplies the information resources that its clients will need, as such there need to be a higher awareness of what the library has (Yebowaah & Plockey, 2018). Most library users need to be made aware of the existence of resources in the library. This is a growing concern regarding library use in higher education institutions in Plateau State.

Library promotion is simply informing library client(s) on what is done in the library and what the library can do for the client(s). Promotion is a form of communication intended to persuade viewers, readers, or listeners to take action (Yebowaah & Plockey, 2018). The essence is to persuade the client to consume the product. With this in mind, library promotion informs, persuades, and reminds the prospective and current client about the information resources and services provided in a library. The type of client(s) that need the information must be put into consideration to be able to appeal to his/her interest. Library promotion is geared towards library users (general users of the library), and so it becomes very difficult to plan a string of promotions that will cut across the users seeing as they are in different strata, i.e., students, institution staff, researchers, etc. As such, designing a promotion program that will fit each stratum is imperative to carry everybody along.

According to Abimbola and Affiong (2020), promotional techniques used in the promotion of library resources are library produced materials like (brochures, flyers, library email, library websites, reading lists, bibliographies, newsletters, posters, and others); special programs and events (library orientation, workshops, and seminars) and social media like

Facebook, YouTube, blogs, and others. Considering the current age, libraries should think about using digital communication channels to reach a wider audience and engage with users in new ways. This is despite the importance of traditional methods like print advertising and in-person outreaches. Several studies have attributed poor utilisation of the available information resources in the library to inadequate promotion and awareness of library resources and services. For example, Patil and Pradhan (2014) reiterated that to attract more and more users to the library, library staff need to extend promotion and cooperation to users and market their services. Libraries should invest in targeted promotion campaigns to raise awareness of their offerings, knowing full well that promotion can significantly impact how library resources and services are utilised.

Enhancing employability is adapting to technological change and innovation. Accepting the changes in work and putting it to use by librarians will give room for relevance, attracting the need for more labour and stamping the profession's presence. Increasing the employability of the workforce in the face of ongoing and future structural changes can help foster innovation and the adoption of new technologies as well as boost productivity by speeding up the reallocation of labour from less-productive activities to more productive ones and improving the well-being of workers (World bank, 2016). Librarians need to bring relevant skills to make their information resources and services consumed relevant in the field. They must develop a positive behaviour, attitude, and aptitude to enable their clients to trust them and their services. The library system should provide an enabling environment for librarians to thrive.

The library found in research institutions like the Federal College of Education Pankshin and the University of Jos is an academic library. Academic libraries are the repository of knowledge where services like internet service, current awareness service, bindery services, indexing, and abstracting service, circulation of library information resources, CD-ROM database search, etc., are rendered to library clients.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Nowadays, libraries are investing considerable amounts in getting information resources. After the huge investment, the materials (printed and non-printed) are underutilized, which makes it become a 'white elephant project'. Libraries should consider and work out this investment's cost-benefit analysis (Patil & Pradhan, 2014). What is the effect of a library without utilizing the information resources she spent all her financial and human resources to build up? The essence of this work is to determine how the information resources can be promoted for effective and efficient Utilization for enhanced employability.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. Examine the promotional strategies employed in the Federal College of Education Pankshin and University of Jos Libraries to enhance utilisation of information resources.
2. Identify the level of awareness among library staff regarding utilising information resources in enhancing employability.
3. Determine the challenges that library staff face in promoting information resources.
4. Determine the challenges library staff face in the utilisation of information resources for employability enhancement.

5. Provide strategies for improving library promotion for employability enhancement in the Federal College of Education Pankshin and University of Jos Libraries.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Current Library Promotion Activities***

As librarians, one should always promote library services because utilising them fulfils the purpose of stocking the library with information resources. Libraries have traditionally been involved in library promotion and data resources and services through the display of new books, exhibitions, newsletters, user orientation programs, library guide manufacturing or use of the library, library issuance, library week outreach, and other related programs (Eda, & Ejiro, 2019). All these are geared towards promotion, and more trendy activities must be introduced to meet societal needs. Library promotion can also be traced down to Dr. Ranganathan's five laws of library science- books are for use, every reader his/her book, every book its reader, save the reader's time, and the library is a growing organism. For these laws to be effectively implemented, promotion must set in. When the library embarks on promotion, it is targeted towards high-level customer satisfaction, increased usage, improved value for the mother institution, and ensuring high service delivery to library clients. It is, therefore, not surprising that increasing numbers of academic libraries embrace social media to support and promote library services (Eda & Ejiro, 2019).

### ***Utilisation of Information Resources in the Library***

Many studies have affirmed that for libraries to increase the utilisation of their information resources significantly, there is a need to improve promotion strategies to enhance

user engagement. Libraries can increase engagement and ensure that their resources and services are utilised to their full potential by understanding their users' needs and preferences and tailoring their promotion and awareness creation efforts accordingly. Therefore, utilisation of the library refers to the library's reported use of information resources by library users (Ani, Ekeh, Ezemoyih, Okpara, & Igu, 2022). This can be measured by frequenting the library, patronising the library, using the information resources, utilising the services rendered, and knowing how to quench an information need. The utilisation of the resources is to satisfy the information needs of the library clients for which the resources were collected. (Ani et al., 2022) present that the inefficient use of the library's collection will not justify the large sum of money spent on the acquisition of materials, and it will likely affect the quality of teaching and learning in the institution. This will undoubtedly affect the crop of graduates dished out by the institution.

### ***Enhancing Employability***

The library schools in schools produce graduates that need to be gainfully employed. Employability is the capability of getting and keeping satisfactory work related to a profession (Felix, Bello, & Saidu, 2020). The level of how librarians in the field work hard in justifying the library and information science training will pave the way for future librarians. The incoming librarians must arm themselves with recent skills and technological knowledge. LIS graduates are expected to have core library skills and implement IT knowledge efficiently and effectively (Yadav & Bankar, 2016). It is imperative to note that the level of commitment and dedication injected into the system by professionals will create room for the incoming.

### **Methodology**

A descriptive survey research design was used for this study. Plateau State has plenty of academic libraries servicing different research institutions. The target population is 94 library staff (35 professional librarians and 41 paraprofessionals of the University of Jos and 8 professional librarians and 10 paraprofessional staff of Federal College of Education Pankshin). The sample size of this study is the entire 94 respondents. The sampling method adopted for this study is the census method. All the target populations are used to collect data. It is going to be used because the study population is small and will give reliable and accurate results. Hence, no sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire divided into five clusters. 94 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents, and 86 copies (91.5%) were retrieved and used for the analysis—descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used in data analysis and presentation.

### **Results and Discussions**

The questionnaire includes the cadres of library staff as professional librarians and paraprofessional librarians. The various results returned from the questionnaire is described below:

**Table 1: Cadre/Response Rate**

<b>Cadre</b>	<b>Professional librarian</b>	<b>Paraprofessional Librarian</b>
Federal College of Education Pankshin	7	10
University of Jos	32	37

To calculate the mean response ( $X$ ), we assigned values to each response category as follows: Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1.

The mean (X) for each statement is calculated by multiplying the number of responses in each category by its corresponding value, adding up these products, and dividing by the total number of returned questionnaires (86). The mean (X) numbers ranging from 3 and above is the benchmark of ‘accepted’ while numbers below 3 is the point of ‘rejected’ for research questions 1, 3 and 4. The mean value represents the average response for each statement, indicating the overall sentiment or agreement level towards the specific challenge. A higher mean value suggests a stronger agreement or acknowledgement of the challenge, while a lower mean value indicates disagreement or a lesser concern.

**Research Question One: What promotional strategies are employed in the Federal College of Education Pankshin and University of Jos Libraries to enhance awareness and utilisation of information resources?**

**Table 2: Promotional strategies employed in the Federal College of Education Pankshin and University of Jos Libraries to enhance awareness and utilisation of information resources**

S/N	Items	S	A	U	D	S	Mean (X)	Decision
1	Social media campaigns: such as book recommendations, book reviews, and library event updates.	0	0	1	32	53	1.4	Rejected
2	Display tables: such as Black History Month or Women's History Month.	0	0	9	41	36	1.7	Rejected
3	Contests and giveaways	0		4	52	30	1.7	Rejected
4	Library events: such as author talks, workshops, and film screenings, to attract people to the library and promote library resources and services.	0	36	6	29	15	2.7	Rejected
5	Library newsletters	0	46	9	13	18	2.9	Rejected
6	Promotional materials: such as bookmarks, posters, and flyers, to distribute in the library and in the community to promote library resources and services.	0	46	9	14	17	2.9	Rejected

7	User survey studies	0	52	8	7	19	3.1	Accepted
8	Collaborations with other library	0	0	7	42	37	1.7	Rejected
9	Outreach programs	13	51	4	2	16	3.5	Accepted
10	Book clubs			6	39	41	1.6	Rejected
11	Library tours	44	30	4	3	2	4.3	Accepted
12	User education program including ICT training	53	24	3	2	4	4.3	Accepted
13	Suggestion boxes	19	51	0	0	16	3.7	Accepted

Key: SA=Strongly Agree; A= Agree; Undecided; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree

Results in Table 2 indicate that user-focused and interactive strategies like survey studies, outreach programs, library tours, user education programs, and suggestions are mostly used as promotional strategies in enhancing awareness and utilisation of information resources in the Federal College of Education Pankshin and University of Jos Libraries. On the other hand, the strategies with lower mean ratings (1.4 to 2.9) which is below the benchmark are rejected decisions, such as social media campaigns, display tables, contests and giveaways, library events, library newsletters, promotional materials, collaborations with other libraries, and book clubs, may require further improvement or adjustments to engage the target audience better and achieve higher levels of awareness for library service utilisation.

**Research Question Two: What is the level of awareness among library staff regarding utilising information resources in enhancing employability?**

**Table 3: The level of awareness among library staff regarding utilising information resources in enhancing employability**

Institution	Respondents	Total	Yes	No
Federal College of Education Pankshin	Professional librarian	7	5 (71.4%)	2 (28.6%)
	Paraprofessional librarian	10	2 (20%)	8 (80%)
University of Jos	Professional librarian	32	23 (71.9%)	9 (28.1%)
	Paraprofessional librarian	37	12 (32.4%)	25 (67.6%)

Among the professional librarian of Federal College of Education Pankshin, 5 out of 7 respondents (71.4%) indicated awareness and understanding of the role of utilizing information resources in enhancing employability. Among the paraprofessional librarians, 2 out of 10 respondents (20%) indicated awareness and understanding. While 23 out of 32 respondents (71.9%) of the University of Jos academic staff indicated awareness and understanding. Among the paraprofessional librarians, 12 out of 37 respondents (32.4%) indicated awareness and understanding of utilizing information resources in enhancing employability.

Based on this analysis, there is a higher awareness and understanding among the professional librarians compared to the paraprofessional librarians in both institutions. The professional at both institutions generally showed a higher percentage of "Yes" responses, indicating a relatively higher level of awareness and understanding regarding utilising information resources in enhancing employability. However, it is worth noting that the overall percentages of "Yes" responses among professional and paraprofessional are relatively lower in the Federal College of Education Pankshin compared to the University of Jos.

This analysis suggests that further efforts may be needed to improve awareness and understanding among library staff, particularly among the paraprofessional staff, at both institutions to enhance the utilisation of information resources for employability purposes. This could involve targeted training, workshops, seminars, etc.

**Research Question Three What are the challenges library staff face in promoting information resources in these libraries?**

**Table 4: Challenges library staff face in promoting information resources in these libraries**

S/N	Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean X	Decision
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1	Unstable Internet connectivity	65	15	3	3	0	3.9	Accepted
2	Physical barriers	43	21	4	8	10	3.9	Accepted
3	Political and social factors	0	34	1	23	28	2.3	Rejected
4	Competition from other sources	57	22	1	4	2	4.5	Accepted
5	User needs and preferences	44	29	3	7	3	4.2	Accepted
6	Inadequate fund	42	33	2	6	3	4.2	Accepted
7	Technological barriers	31	24	8	14	9	3.6	Accepted
8	Uncooperative staff attitudes	54	23	0	3	6	4.3	Accepted
9	Lack of promotion skill	64	15	1	4	2	4.5	Accepted
10	Lack of ICT skills	66	11	1	2	6	4.5	Accepted
11	Notion that promotion is not a library objective	57	21	3	5	0	4.5	Accepted

In general, the respondents strongly agreed that lack of library promotion, notion that promotion is not a library objective, lack of ICT skills and competition from other sources user with mean rating of 4.5 each, are the challenges hindering effective promotion in these two libraries. Others include uncooperative staff attitude, users’ needs and preference, unstable internet connectivity, inadequate funding, unstable internet connectivity, physical barriers and technological barriers as the challenges of library staff in promoting and facilitating the utilisation of information resources for employability enhancement in the Federal College of Education Pankshin and the University of Jos Libraries. Addressing these challenges can improve the effectiveness of promoting information resources for employability enhancement. The statement with the lowest mean is Political and social factors (2.3), indicating that the respondents disagreed with this statement.

**Research Question Four: What are the challenges library staff face in the utilisation of information resources?**

**Table 5: Challenges library staff face in the utilisation of information resources**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Decision
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							<b>X</b>	
1	Technological advancements	54	12	8	5	7	4.2	Accepted
2	Information overload	29	34	3	11	9	3.7	Accepted
3	Licensing and copyright restrictions	45	29	0	8	4	4.2	Accepted
4	Budget constraints	54	23	0	2	5	4.3	Accepted
5	Digital divide	25	36	1	23	10	3.8	Accepted
6	Information literacy	22	21	1	11	31	2.9	Rejected
7	Changing information needs and expectations	38	26	4	11	7	3.9	Accepted
8	Preservation and archiving	41	19	9	14	3	3.9	Accepted
9	Data privacy and security	37	23	0	19	7	3.7	Accepted

Based on the mean scores and the provided decision criteria, it appears that all the challenges faced by library staff in the utilisation of information resources have been accepted, except for Information literacy. The challenge of information literacy received a relatively low mean score of 2.9 and has been rejected. The statement, “budget constraints” received the highest mean rate of 4.3 followed by licensing and copyright restrictions and technological advancements with equal mean rate of 4.2. This indicates that to improve the utilisation of information in these two institutions, these challenges have to be addressed.

**Research Question Five: What are the strategies for improving the library promotion for employability enhancement in the Federal College of Education Pankshin and University of Jos Libraries?**

**Table 6: Strategies for improving the library promotion for employability enhancement in the Federal College of Education Pankshin and University of Jos Libraries**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	<b>X</b>	Decision
1	Enhance the library's online presence	64	15	3	2	2	4.6	Accepted
2	Collaborate with other organizations	33	31	8	9	5	3.9	Accepted
3	Engage with users	58	20	2	4	2	4.5	Accepted
4	Provide personalized services	24	43	0	8	11	3.7	Accepted
5	Developing promotional strategies such as exhibitions...	55	16	3	4	8	4.2	Accepted
6	Offering incentives	17	16	7	25	21	2.8	Rejected
7	Evaluate and improve	36	32	1	8	9	3.9	Accepted

8	Adequate funding	32	25	3	14	12	4	Accepted
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Based on the data, the library's most effective strategies for improvement are enhancing the library's online presence (4.6), engaging with users (4.5), developing promotional strategies such as exhibitions, etc. (4.2) and adequate funding (4). These areas require more attention and investment from library management to improve promotion and utilisation of library services and resources. In contrast, offering incentives with mean rating of 2.8 was rejected as the strategy for improving the library promotion and utilisation of information resources for employability enhancement in the Federal College of Education Pankshin and the University of Jos Libraries.

### **Recommendations**

The Research has provided valuable insights into library promotion and utilisation of information resources for employability enhancement. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations can be drawn:

1. Libraries should carry out library promotion that can be seen by most in the social media platforms. The library needs to be in consonance with the clients. Since most clients are social media patronisers, then, the library should take the information to them.
2. Develop targeted promotional strategies: Academic libraries should develop targeted marketing strategies to increase awareness and utilise information resources for employability enhancement. These strategies should consider library users' specific needs and preferences, employing traditional and digital marketing techniques.
3. Strengthen partnerships with stakeholders: The libraries should strengthen their partnerships with key stakeholders such as academic departments, career services, and faculty members.

Collaborative efforts can lead to integrating information resources into the curriculum and providing targeted support and guidance to enhance employability.

4. Enhance information literacy programs: The libraries should prioritise information literacy programs to equip library users, including students and staff, with the necessary skills to effectively access, evaluate, and utilise information resources for employability enhancement.

These programs should be customized to meet the unique requirements of various user groups.

5. Improve technological infrastructure: Adequate investment in technological infrastructure is crucial for enhancing the promotion and utilisation of information resources. The libraries should ensure access to up-to-date hardware, software, and online platforms to provide seamless access to information resources.

6. Conduct regular user surveys and feedback: Continuous assessment of user needs and satisfaction is essential for improving library services. Regular user surveys and feedback mechanisms should be implemented to identify areas for improvement and address any challenges library users face in utilising information resources.

7. To address the challenges of budget constraints, libraries can actively seek out grant opportunities from government agencies, foundations, and other organizations that support library initiatives.

8. Also, libraries can partner and collaborate with other libraries, as well as initiate fundraising and donations program, cost-effective resource selection, collection assessment and weeding, volunteer programs, energy-saving initiatives, advocacy and public support, and embrace open educational resources (OER). By implementing a combination of these strategies, libraries can

mitigate the impact of budget constraints and continue to provide valuable services and resources to their communities.

## **Conclusions**

The study highlights the importance of library promotion and utilisation of information resources in enhancing employability among library users. This point out the need for increased awareness and understanding among library staff regarding the role of information utilisation in employability enhancement. This can be related to the fact why some research institutions on the Plateau have refused to employ professional librarians in their libraries. In some institutions, you see few librarians servicing the whole institution. Implementing these recommendations will contribute to the overall effectiveness of academic libraries in supporting the institution which will enhance employability in Plateau State.

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