

## Communication Strategy of University Libraries and its Role in Enhancing Beneficiaries' Loyalty (A study of a Sample of Beneficiaries of Ghardaia University Libraries)

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### Abstract:

The study aimed to identify the role of the communication strategy of libraries in enhancing the loyalty of the beneficiary at the level of the libraries of the University of Ghardaia. The study relied on the descriptive approach, and used the questionnaire tool on a random stratified sample of 190 students from among the university library patrons. Statistical tools were employed using the statistical analysis program (SPSS) to analyze and discuss the results of the collected data. The study found a positive relationship between the communication strategy of the libraries under study and the loyalty behavior of the beneficiaries of its services. Most of the respondents expressed their satisfaction with the library's collection, as well as the method of treatment and the speed of response in providing information sources. The study also highlighted that the communication strategy of Ghardaia University libraries contributed to increasing the rate of regular visits and demand for library services. This reflects the importance that should be given by the authorities responsible for university libraries to the communication strategy adopted with the patrons of these libraries in order to maintain them and support their loyalty behavior.

**Keywords:** Communication Strategy, Communication Strategy for Libraries, Beneficiary Satisfaction, Beneficiary Loyalty, University Libraries.

### Introduction

Humans are naturally inclined to communicate and interact with the environment in which they live. Communication is an inevitable human, social and civilizational necessity for the cohesion of individuals, groups and peoples. Communication is the beating heart of the institution, as it cannot achieve its goals without the existence of a communication network. In fact, it is very difficult for a person to imagine the existence of any institution, regardless of its type, without communication, through which information is transferred to its audience (Rowley, 2006).

Perhaps libraries are one of these institutions that use communication, as they cannot continue and survive unless there is constant communication between all their members and their audience (Faulk, & Crist, 2020). Today, libraries face multiple challenges more than ever before, the main source of which is the changes that occur in the environment in which they operate (Ross, & Sennyey, 2008). This is a result of the challenges imposed by the characteristics and features of the twenty-first century, such as globalization, intense competition, and comprehensive development. The world has become a small global knowledge village as a result of technological and information development that has included various levels, especially the aspect of information and communications (Mugwisi, & al., 2018). In light of the tremendous technological development and the diversity and multiplicity of information sources available online, libraries of all kinds, and university libraries in particular, are facing major challenges in attracting and retaining beneficiaries in a way that enhances their loyalty to the library. Building trust with users, improving their experiences, and enhancing their belonging to the library requires careful planning of all aspects of communication, through optimal use of all available means of communication, and providing the necessary information in a flexible and effective manner (Yildiz, 2012).

The ability of university libraries to allocate their resources efficiently is a basic requirement and condition for their success, survival, continuity, and competitiveness (Sriram, & Rajev, 2014). In addition to adopting an advanced management approach in developing a communication strategy that facilitates the communication process efficiently and

ensures the improvement of their performance. The communication strategy plays a fundamental role within university libraries in parallel with investing in the optimal use of modern technologies to help libraries provide services in a more advanced and better way (*Chen, & al., 2004*).

In light of the diversity of communication means in the era of new media, it has become necessary for university libraries to respond to changes in the aspirations of beneficiaries of their services by updating or reconsidering their communication strategy in order to maintain the same level of beneficiaries' demand on the one hand, and to achieve their level of loyalty towards the library and its services on the other hand. Hence, this study came to address a problem related to the extent to which the communication strategy of libraries at Ghardaia University contributes to enhancing loyalty behavior among beneficiaries of its services?

From this standpoint, the importance of the study is evident in the fact that university libraries - in general - seek to ensure the continuity of their services and their effectiveness to meet the changing requirements of the academic community and achieve their mission towards supporting the educational and research process. This justifies the effectiveness of their presence before the supervisory authorities and achieves their influence within their surroundings. Therefore, regardless of the quality of the services provided by the library, re-evaluating the communication strategy according to the requirements of its audience, which has become increasingly involved in social media, will have a clear impact on maintaining the continuity of its beneficiaries' satisfaction and supporting their loyalty to it.

**The study seeks to achieve the following set of objectives:**

- To examine the reality of communication strategies adopted by Ghardaia University Libraries.
- The extent to which communication strategies implemented by Ghardaia University Libraries respond to the aspirations of beneficiaries, in light of the diversity of social media.
- Measuring the level of beneficiaries' satisfaction with the services provided to them, and their knowledge of library resources.
- Enhancing the loyalty of beneficiaries of Ghardaia University Libraries by adopting a communication strategy that responds to the changing needs of these beneficiaries.

The motivations for this study come from two sources: the first is the multiplicity of digital information sources. The second is the multiplicity of social media and the services they provide. This poses a real challenge for university libraries to maintain the beneficiaries of their services.

This study contributes to the existing literature, in presenting the contemporary roles of university libraries in light of current challenges. This is done by providing an understanding of the relationship between the communication strategy of university libraries and the loyalty behavior of beneficiaries of their services. The study also highlights the importance of libraries adopting effective communication strategies, specifically designed to meet the needs of beneficiaries and increase their interaction with the library. It also puts forward recommendations on developing or re-evaluating the communication strategy of university libraries to enhance the loyalty of beneficiaries of their services.

The results of the study indicate that there is a positive relationship between the communication strategy of Ghardaia University Libraries and the loyalty behavior of beneficiaries of its services. The communication strategy adopted by Ghardaia University Libraries contributed to increasing the percentage of regular visits by beneficiaries and their interest in library services. This reflects their satisfaction with the services provided and raises the level of their loyalty.

❖ **The Study Hypotheses:**

A main hypothesis was adopted from which three (03) sub-hypotheses emerged:

❖ **The Main Hypothesis:**

There is a positive relationship between the communication strategy at the level of Ghardaia University libraries and the loyalty of the beneficiaries of its services.

❖ **The Sub-Hypotheses:**

- 1) **The First Hypothesis ( $H_{A1}$ ):** There is a positive relationship between the analysis of the environment of the libraries of Ghardaia University and the loyalty of the beneficiaries of the library services.
- 2) **The Second Hypothesis ( $H_{B2}$ ):** There is a positive relationship between planning and formulating the objectives of the communication strategy at the level of the libraries of the University of Ghardaia and the loyalty of the beneficiaries of its services.
- 3) **The Third Hypothesis ( $H_{C3}$ ):** There is a positive relationship between the process of evaluating the communication strategy at the level of Ghardaia University libraries and the loyalty of the beneficiaries of its services.

In addition to this introduction, this research paper consists in its second part of previous studies, then the methodology, then a discussion of the results, and then the conclusion.

I) **The Literary Review of the Previous Studies**

**I.1) From Communication Methods and Policies towards a Communication Strategy in University Libraries**

In this context, it is not possible to list all studies related to the topic of communication in university libraries. However, we can select what serves the topic of the research paper regarding presenting some models and methods of communication, then communication policies, marketing plans and strategic planning in university libraries, starting with a review of communication in university libraries and its effectiveness and the role of librarians in communication with the use of social media. Then the communication policy, the study (Umoren, & Agwunobi, 2017) addressed the topic of communication in academic libraries, focusing on the University of "Calabar" Library as a case study. The study highlighted the importance of communication in the dynamics of libraries and its role in achieving their objectives related to research, education and community service. The study aimed to investigate trends and developments related to communication in academic libraries, with a focus on the communication technologies used in the University of "Calabar" Library in providing information services. The study concluded that communication enhances the efficiency of information service delivery in academic libraries. It improves the processes of searching for, accessing, processing, storing and distributing information. Effective communication technologies also contribute to enhancing the objectives of teaching, learning, research and community service in academic institutions.

In a study (Ifidon, & Ugwuanyi, 2013), it was emphasized the importance of effective communication in academic libraries and its role in providing knowledge and enhancing the decision-making process in university libraries. The study aimed to highlight the role of effective communication in academic libraries in ensuring the rapid and effective provision of knowledge. The most important results of the study indicated that effective communication contributes to improving relations between library workers and the public, and enhances the efficiency of service provision. The study also shed light on some factors that hinder effective communication by proposing some strategies to overcome these obstacles, such as direct communication and taking into account the feelings and needs of beneficiaries during communication.

In a study (Martins, Cortes, & Gabriel, 2001) on the importance of communication in libraries, especially in light of recent technological changes and their impact on the methods of accessing and using information. It focused on the role of librarians in managing information and communicating with users in a changing digital environment, highlighting the importance of library services adapting to technological developments to meet the diverse needs of users. The study aimed to analyze the different forms of communication between university library staff and its users, focusing on the role of the librarian in improving the flow of information and meeting the needs of users. The most important results of the study indicated the importance of libraries adapting to technological developments, especially with the emergence of the concept of the "productive consumer" that combines information consumption and production. The study emphasized the importance of interactive services provided by libraries, such as Web 2.0 platforms, electronic newsletters, and training courses, in improving communication with users and meeting their needs. The study showed the importance of providing support services for users with special educational needs through the (BAES) service. The results also indicated a decrease in requests for borrowing between libraries due to the availability of information on the Internet, which emphasizes the need to develop library services to meet the changing needs of users.

Study (Peacemaker, Robinson, & Hurst, 2016) addressed the topic of academic libraries' use of social media as a tool for communicating with users. It focused on the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) library as a case study, to investigate how libraries manage their presence on various social media platforms. This study aimed to develop a unified, research-based vision for new media communication, and to link public relations best practices to social media strategies in academic libraries. The results of the study showed a gap between library practices and public relations best practices in social media management. While public relations focus on planning, audience research, and impact measurement, libraries often lack specific strategies for managing social media content. The study made recommendations for libraries on the importance of developing a strong content strategy, measuring impact, and focusing on building relationships with patrons.

It is worth noting that there are many studies that have addressed the reality and policies of university libraries with social media sites, including (Mensah, & Onyancha, 2021; Fong, Au, Lam, & Chiu, 2020; Harrison, Burrell, Velasquez, & Schreiner, 2017).

The study (Tzedaki, & Nisotaki, 2022) addressed the communication policy of academic libraries in the era of technology, focusing on the library of the Hellenic Mediterranean University (H.M.U). As academic libraries are non-profit institutions, they provide their services to the academic community, and therefore adopting an effective communication policy is crucial to their success and ability to meet the needs of users. The study discussed the importance of using modern technologies to raise awareness of the services provided by the library and enhance its role as a space for social interaction. The study aimed to examine the current communication policy in the academic library of the Hellenic Mediterranean University (H.M.U) while identifying the needs, aspirations and desires of library users and suggesting ways to improve the communication policy and raise public awareness using new technologies. The study reached results that showed that the library website is the main source of information, but a large percentage of students are not aware of its existence, and

users prefer to deal directly with library staff to obtain information and assistance. Users expressed their desire to increase working hours, the number of computers, and provide space for breaks and cultural activities. The study indicated the need to improve the library's internal communication policy to enhance awareness of the services provided. The study concluded that it is important for academic libraries to update their communication policies to keep pace with technological developments and meet the needs of their users, with a focus on the use of social media, improving website services, and providing diverse and attractive digital content.

The study (*Nurhidayah, & Widarti, 2019*) addressed the challenges facing libraries in maintaining their presence at the top levels of providing information services, in light of competition with other entities active in the field of providing information services. The study focused on the importance of marketing strategies in attracting and retaining users, including building good relationships with them and providing high-quality services that ensure their loyalty. The study aimed to describe the promotion strategy as an activity that allows enhancing the loyalty of university library users. The study concluded that an effective promotion strategy for university libraries includes the following steps: discussing the steps for promoting information services and determining the promotion objectives, identifying the target user group, setting a budget for promotional activities, choosing the appropriate media for publication and promotion, evaluating the effectiveness of the media used, and managing the promotion strategy through human resources, infrastructure, and library staff activities. The study concluded that developing an effective strategic model for promotion in university libraries contributes to enhancing beneficiary loyalty.

In a study by (*Saunders, 2015*) on the strategic plans of academic libraries, it focused on the most important trends and areas that do not receive sufficient attention. Rapid developments in technology, in addition to changes in the field of scholarly communication, data management, and teaching methods in higher education, have affected the aspirations of users, forcing academic libraries to develop their capabilities and work on developing new service offerings. The study aimed to identify the most important issues that are the first priority for academic libraries at the present time, according to their strategic plans, and to determine the extent to which these issues are consistent with the most important trends identified by the (ACRL) organization and other professional and research institutions. The study reached a set of results, the most important of which are: University libraries focus heavily on collections and library assets, as they were included in all strategic plans reviewed. Collaboration is also the second priority for libraries, as libraries are interested in cooperating with individuals and departments in all campus spaces, while recruitment, marketing, evaluation, virtual space or modern technologies represent other areas of important focus for the library. The study results indicated the importance of aligning academic libraries' strategic plans with the university's mission and goals. The study also highlighted the importance of focusing on modern areas, such as data services, to maintain the position of academic libraries in the changing higher education environment.

We note that according to the results of this study regarding the areas not recognized within the priorities of the strategic plans of university libraries, the subject of the communication plan adopted by these libraries in the long term was not mentioned. Also, previous studies related to studying the subject of communication in university libraries and the adopted communication policies did not address the communication strategy that is primarily related to activating a long-term communication policy in university libraries.

## **1.2) Towards Strategies for Building Loyalty Among Beneficiaries of University Library Services**

A study by (*Gorman, n.d.*) addressed the problem of declining library patrons due to competition with other information sources, especially those available online. The study focused on the importance of building strong relationships with library users to better understand their needs and increase their loyalty. The study indicated the importance of purposeful interaction with users to achieve their loyalty. The study aimed to highlight strategies for building purposeful relationships with library users in order to enhance their loyalty, rather than focusing on simply attracting new users. The study emphasized the importance of building purposeful relationships with library users to enhance their loyalty to the library and ensure their periodic return. The study identified two types of value that libraries can provide to attract and retain users:

- ✓ **Functional Value:** This includes ease of use, saving time, and comfort.
- ✓ **Emotional Value:** This is about making the user feel important through interaction, respect, and appreciation.

The study emphasized the importance of focusing on emotional value alongside functional value in building user loyalty. The study also reviewed some strategies that libraries can follow to achieve meaningful interaction with users and build strong relationships with them, such as linking library services to aspects of importance to its users, and building a good reputation for the library through reliability in providing services.

The study (*Tajedini, & Amirtaimory, 2017*) addressed the theoretical model for building user loyalty in public libraries in the Iranian city of Kerman. It considered that user loyalty is one of the challenges facing libraries in light of the availability of alternative information sources. The study aimed to explain the theoretical model of user loyalty to public libraries in

Kerman by adopting the qualitative approach based on the Grounded Theory. The study reached a theoretical model consisting of six (06) parts: the main event, causes, background, strategies, interventions, and results. The study also showed that taking into account ethical and humanitarian principles when dealing with library users plays an important role in building loyalty, and is a major factor in attracting beneficiaries. Other factors must also be taken into account, such as quality of service, appropriate equipment, provision of diverse and modern information resources, and exploitation of cyberspace.

The study (*Silvana, & Hermansyah, 2024*) focused on customer relationship management (CRM) at the level of university libraries and its role in building and enhancing the loyalty of beneficiaries of its services. The customer relationship management strategy is considered vital in light of the noticeable competition in dealing with various modern alternatives to information sources, and therefore it has become necessary to build strong and sustainable relationships with beneficiaries. The study aimed to describe how the library of the University of Education Indonesia (UPI) applied customer relationship management to meet the needs of beneficiaries and create satisfaction with them in order to enhance their loyalty. The results of the study showed that the application of customer relationship management in the library of the University of Education Indonesia (UPI) in order to increase beneficiary loyalty includes three main factors: acquiring new customers (Acquire), enhancing relationships with existing customers (Enhance), and retaining customers (Retain). These goals were achieved by providing distinguished services, developing existing services, and adding new services that keep pace with technological developments.

The study confirmed that meeting the needs of beneficiaries enhances their satisfaction, which contributes to building a positive image of the library, which ultimately leads to building a loyal and faithful audience. The library focused on providing specialized information, providing a variety of information sources, and facilitating the process of searching for information. The library also adopted the principle of treating all beneficiaries with kindness and respect, seeking to solve their problems quickly and effectively, and offering awards to active and loyal beneficiaries.

The study (*Dankwah, 2021*) focused on user loyalty building strategies for a sample of university libraries in Ghana. Libraries are facing major challenges in attracting and retaining users in light of technological developments and changes in user needs. The study highlighted the importance of using marketing strategies to build user loyalty, and discussed the challenges facing libraries in this context. The study aimed to review the strategies used to build user loyalty in the selected university libraries in Ghana, then identify the factors influencing user loyalty and propose a framework to guide librarians in their quest to build user loyalty. The study reached a set of results, the most important of which are:

- ✓ Although the university libraries under study were using different methods to market their services, none of them had a marketing plan to guide their marketing agenda.
- ✓ Library user loyalty was defined through four stages: cognitive loyalty, emotional loyalty, behavioral loyalty and actual loyalty.
- ✓ To achieve actual loyalty, which is manifested through the user's commitment to using the library and its resources, librarians should start from cognitive loyalty, which is characterized by service quality, and then move to emotional loyalty, which is mainly manifested in the form of user satisfaction. Emotional loyalty leads to behavioral loyalty, which is mainly expressed through the users' intention to use the library.

The study recommended that libraries should plan their marketing activities to build and retain user loyalty. The study also proposed a practical framework to guide librarians in their efforts to build user loyalty.

We notice from previous studies related to the variable of beneficiary loyalty that they agreed on the importance of libraries paying attention to the subject of the loyalty of their beneficiaries, which is basically related to their ability to retain beneficiaries by responding to their requirements in order to gain their satisfaction, so that their loyalty to the library is ultimately achieved. However, these studies that addressed the variable of user loyalty behavior to the library did not address linking this variable to the library's communication strategy, which would ensure continuous communication with beneficiaries and keep pace with their aspirations by creating services they desire, which would enhance their satisfaction and lead to gaining their loyalty.

By reviewing previous studies, we note, to the extent of the researcher's knowledge, that there is no study that addressed the relationship between the communication strategy of university libraries and the loyalty behavior of their users. This study contributes to the literature related to identifying the contemporary roles of university libraries in light of current challenges, by providing an understanding of the relationship between the communication strategy of university libraries and the loyalty behavior of beneficiaries of their services. The study also highlights the importance of libraries adopting effective communication strategies, specifically designed to meet the needs of beneficiaries and increase their interaction with the library. It also puts forward recommendations regarding the development or re-evaluation of the communication strategy of university libraries to enhance the loyalty of beneficiaries of their services.

## II) The Methodology

### **II.1) The Research Design**

This study adopted the descriptive approach to achieve its objectives. The descriptive approach is considered appropriate for this research because it aims to describe and explain the relationship between the communication strategy of university libraries (independent variable) and the loyalty of beneficiaries (dependent variable). This approach also allows us to collect data from a sample of beneficiaries to understand their perceptions and views on the subject of the study.

### **II.2) The Study Community**

The study community consists of all students registered in the libraries of the University of Ghardaia who have the right to benefit from the services of six (06) libraries in the faculties affiliated with the university, namely: the library of the Faculty of Economics, Business and Management Sciences, the library of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology, the library of the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences, the library of the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, and the library of the Faculty of Languages and Literature. The total number of students actually registered in the university libraries is 1738 registered students.

### **II.3) The Study Sample**

The study relied on a stratified random sample, which was taken from the total number of students registered in the libraries of the faculties of Ghardaia University in their various specializations and levels, whose number reached 1738 students for the academic year 2023. The sample items were collected by taking 10% of the total number of students registered in the library of each of the six (06) faculties affiliated with Ghardaia University, noting that it was taken into account that the study sample includes the various levels and academic stages at the university with the various specializations available to the category of those registered in the university libraries. The number of study sample items reached 190 beneficiaries.

### **II.4) The Study Tools**

The questionnaire was used as the main tool for collecting data in this study. The questionnaire was carefully designed to include questions covering all aspects of the independent variable, which is the communication strategy of university libraries, and the dependent variable, which is the loyalty of beneficiaries of Ghardaia University libraries. The questionnaire was divided into three main axes:

- **The First Axis:** relates to questions about the personal data of the respondent and the number of times he visits the library.
- **The Second Axis:** includes 20 closed questions about the reality of the communication strategy at the level of the libraries of the University of Ghardaia.
- **The Third Axis:** includes 10 closed questions about the manifestations of loyalty behaviors among the beneficiaries of the services of the libraries of the University of Ghardaia.

In addition to two open questions that the respondent can answer freely.

The questionnaire questions were formulated in a clear and concise manner. A three-point Likert scale was used to understand the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Before distributing the questionnaire to the study sample, a pilot study was conducted on a small sample of beneficiaries to ensure the clarity of the questions and the effectiveness of the questionnaire.

### **II.5) The Study Period and Data Collection**

The field study related to the distribution and receipt of responses to the questionnaire extended from late February 2023 to the end of June of the same year. The questionnaires were distributed to the study sample in the field and randomly to students who visit the university libraries. No deadline was set because the specified percentage of the research community had to be met, taking into account the diversity of students' academic levels and specializations at the same time. 190 questionnaires were collected for analysis within four (04) months. Participants were reminded of the importance of the study and their participation in it, and the confidentiality of the collected information was confirmed.

### **II.6) The Data Analysis**

After collecting the questionnaires, the data were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 24). Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Test was also used to verify the reliability of the study tool, which reached a value of 0.85, which is a very acceptable value, indicating that the study tool is reliable. In addition, arithmetic means, standard deviations, and the Student's T test were used to test the study hypotheses.

## **III) The Study Results**

The study reached a set of results, which we will mention below:

### **III.1) Results Related to the Sample's Personal Data:**

- Regarding the distribution of sample members by gender: The percentage of females in the sample was 61.1%, while the percentage of males was 38.9%.

- Regarding the distribution of sample members by age: The percentage of the highest age group in the sample was 61.1% for those aged between 18 and 25 years, while the lowest percentage was for the age group of students over 46 years at 1.6%.
- Regarding the distribution of sample members by academic level: The highest percentage was for master's level students, estimated at 55.3%.

### **III.2) Results Related to the Reality of the Communication Strategy Adopted at the Level of Ghardaia University Libraries:**

- 57.3% of the sample showed that they regularly visit the library services. As for their frequency of visits, most of the sample members visit the library monthly at a rate of 50.52%. The percentage of those who visit regularly weekly was 39.48%. While the percentage of those who visit daily was 10%.
- 86.3% of the sample agreed that the location of the library is convenient for them and that it is close to them.
- 52.6% of the sample found the library design attractive and comfortable for them. While 38.5% found the library design unsuitable for them. Looking at the opinions of the sample members by gender for this item, 32.1% of females expressed psychological satisfaction with the library design. While the percentage of males was 20.52%. As for those who did not find psychological satisfaction with the design of the library building, the percentage of females was 20.09%, while the percentage of males was 16.31%.
- Regarding the library's provision of the necessary capabilities and equipment: 46.8% of the sample agreed that the necessary equipment for research and learning is available, and 38.4% of the sample believe that the library they use does not have the necessary capabilities and equipment, especially regarding the number of computers allocated to the library's research base and internet space.
- Regarding the compatibility of library working hours with the student's study schedule: 55.3% of the sample expressed their satisfaction with the library's working hours system with study hours, while 35.3% of them were dissatisfied with the library's working hours system. In the same context, with regard to the opinions of sample members according to the study phase, 31.58% of master's students consider that library working hours are compatible with their study hours.
- 76.3% of the sample expressed their satisfaction with the borrowing service through the speed of response of librarians when submitting their requests.
- Regarding the policy of publishing and communicating with beneficiaries of library services, 46.9% of the sample expressed their dissatisfaction with the policy of communication and publishing information implemented by their libraries, while 40.6% expressed their satisfaction with the library's communication procedures with them.
- 71.6% of the sample expressed their disagreement with the lack of activities for introductory activities about the library's interests and services for the benefit of new students.
- 77.3% of the sample showed that they do not agree with the item of receiving short text notifications on various means of communication informing them to return borrowed books when they exceed the period allowed in the library's internal regulations.
- 75.3% of the sample members expressed that they achieve the goal they seek. And 61.5% of the sample members are clearly satisfied with the service of accessing the titles they are looking for when they come to the library.
- 79% of the sample members expressed their satisfaction explicitly with the way librarians deal with them when they go to the library.
- 53.7% of the sample members are satisfied with the number of books allowed for borrowing, while 39.5% of them are dissatisfied with that.
- 50% of the sample members expressed their preference for using email to communicate with the library, while 40.5% prefer to communicate with the library via its Facebook page.

The results related to the reality of the communication strategy at the level of Ghardaia University libraries indicated a high level of satisfaction on the part of students with the various aspects of the communication strategy adopted in Ghardaia University libraries.

### **III.3) Results Related to the Reality of Beneficiary Loyalty at the Level of Ghardaia University Libraries:**

- 55.3% of the sample stated that they usually advise their colleagues to go to the library and benefit from its services.
- 60% of the sample have a constant desire to visit the library. 56.8% of the sample indicated that the reason for the constant visit to the library is their satisfaction with the level of services provided.
- 53.9% of the sample stated that the digital information sources available via the Internet did not affect the rate of their visits to the university libraries.

- 57.3% of the sample speak positively with their colleagues about the services provided to them by the university libraries.
  - 77.4% of the sample have confidence in the services and assistance provided to them by the library staff.
- The results related to the loyalty of beneficiaries to the libraries of Ghardaia University indicated a high level of loyalty among students towards the library.

#### III.4) The Hypotheses Test Results:

Table No. (01): Shows the results of hypotheses testing using Student's T-Test

	Number of Sample Members	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Statistical Value of T-Test	Calculated Significance Level (Significance Level)	Test Result
<b>First Hypothesis</b>	190	24.01	5.08	0.36	57.00	0.00	Acceptable
<b>Second Hypothesis</b>	190	23.66	5.30	0.38	53.68	0.00	Acceptable
<b>Third Hypothesis</b>	190	47.34	7.40	0.53	82.55	0.00	Acceptable

**Source:** Prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the (SPSS program - version 24).

Through the results obtained through the table shown above, and since the level of statistical significance (Sig.) is less than 0.05 (which is the common level), and the test results for the three sub-hypotheses indicated that the average loyalty of the sample members is high. Accordingly, we reject the null hypotheses and accept the alternative hypotheses, so that the results of the hypotheses test are as follows:

- ✓ Accept the first sub-hypothesis ( $H_{A1}$ ).
- ✓ Accept the second sub-hypothesis ( $H_{B1}$ ).
- ✓ Accept the third sub-hypothesis ( $H_{C1}$ ).

#### IV) Discussion of the Results

Here we will present the most important results reached by the study:

- The results related to the reality of the communication strategy at the level of Ghardaia University libraries indicated a high level of satisfaction on the part of students with the various aspects of the communication strategy adopted in Ghardaia University libraries.
- The results related to the reality of the loyalty of beneficiaries to Ghardaia University libraries indicated a high level of loyalty among students towards the library. This was reflected in the students' desire to visit the library and their positive talk about it with their colleagues.
- The results indicated that students trust the library staff and that their satisfaction with the services is a major reason for their visits.
- The respondents expressed their satisfaction with the library's stock and the way in which Ghardaia University libraries staff treat them through the speed of response in providing the required information sources after submitting their request.
- The results of the study indicated a positive relationship between beneficiaries' satisfaction with most aspects of the communication strategy of university libraries and their loyalty to them. This was clearly demonstrated in beneficiaries' satisfaction with the borrowing service, the treatment of librarians, and the extent to which their goals of visiting the library were achieved. However, there are shortcomings in some aspects of communication, such as the policy of publishing and effective communication, library introduction activities, adopting a notification system, and providing the necessary capabilities and equipment, which negatively affects the expansion of the scope of satisfaction among the largest segment of the academic community of Ghardaia University.
- The communication strategy of Ghardaia University Libraries contributed to increasing the percentage of visits and demand for library services by beneficiaries.
- The communication strategy of Ghardaia University Libraries enhanced beneficiary satisfaction and raised their level of loyalty by responding to all beneficiaries' requirements and aspirations.

This means that the communication strategy of the Ghardaia University libraries played an important role in strengthening and gaining the loyalty of the beneficiaries of its services, despite the shortcomings in some communication aspects, which necessitates the need to continue developing the communication strategy of these libraries.



Regarding comparing the results obtained with the results of previous studies:

- The findings of the study regarding regular visits by beneficiaries to the libraries of the University of Ghardaia and their satisfaction with its location are partially consistent with the study (*Gorman, n.d.*) which focused on the importance of ease of access "functional value" as a factor in attracting beneficiaries.
- The study sample's opinions were divided regarding the attractiveness of the library building design and the availability of facilities. Some sample members expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of equipment, which is consistent with the findings of the study (*Tzedaki & Nisotaki, 2022*), which highlighted the importance of providing appropriate facilities, such as computers and rest areas, to enhance user satisfaction. This was also supported by the study (*Tajedini & Amirtaimory, 2017*), which emphasized the importance of appropriate equipment as a factor in building library beneficiary loyalty.
- The majority of the sample members showed their satisfaction with the borrowing service and the compatibility of the library's working hours with their study schedule, reflecting the importance of the "functional value" mentioned in the study (*Gorman, n.d.*), but the dissatisfaction of a portion of the sample with the working hours requires studying the possibility of extending them, as indicated by the study (*Tzedaki & Nisotaki, 2022*).
- The emergence of a significant percentage of sample members' dissatisfaction with the publishing and communication policy is consistent with the study (*Peacemaker, Robinson, & Hurst, 2016*) which highlighted a gap in library practices regarding social media management. This is also supported by the study (*Nurhidayah & Widarti, 2019*) which focused on the importance of marketing and promotional strategies in attracting users. Similar to what was recommended by the study (*Tzedaki & Nisotaki, 2022*) which stressed the need to update library policies to keep pace with technological developments and user needs.
- The absence of orientation and guidance activities for new students is consistent with the study (*Umoren, & Agwunobi, 2017*) which emphasized the importance of orientation programs and introduction to library services for new students.
- The satisfaction of the majority of the sample with achieving their goals when visiting the library and their praise for the way librarians deal with them reflects the importance of "emotional value" indicated by the study (*Gorman, n.d.*), which is also consistent with the study (*Ifidon, & Ugwuanyi, 2013*) which emphasized the importance of effective communication in improving relations between staff and the public.
- The confidence of the majority of the sample in library staff is consistent with the study (*Gorman, n.d.*) which emphasized the importance of building a relationship of trust with beneficiaries.
- The sample's preference to communicate with the library via email and Facebook confirms the importance of adapting the communication strategy to users' preferences, as indicated by (*Martins, Cortes, & Gabriel, 2001*) regarding the importance of libraries adapting to technological developments.
- The sample members' advice to their colleagues to visit the library and their desire to return is an important indicator of the loyalty of these beneficiaries towards their libraries, which is consistent with the study (*Dankwah, 2021*) that focused on the stages of building loyalty, and is consistent with the study (*Silvana, & Hermansyah, 2024*) that emphasized the importance of customer relationship management in building loyalty.
- The association of beneficiaries' satisfaction with the services provided to them with regular visits: This result confirms the importance of beneficiary satisfaction in building their loyalty, which is consistent with the findings of previous studies on beneficiary loyalty (*Tajedini & Amirtaimory, 2017; Silvana, & Hermansyah, 2024; Dankwah, 2021*). These results contribute to a better understanding of the role of the communication strategy of university libraries in enhancing the loyalty of beneficiaries of their services. It shows the importance of developing effective communication strategies to attract beneficiaries by improving the quality of services to achieve beneficiary satisfaction and meet their needs to gain their loyalty.

## Conclusion

At the end of the study, we can recall the results of the hypotheses testing that proved the fulfillment of the main hypothesis of the study, that there is a positive relationship between the communication strategy at the level of the libraries of the University of Ghardaia and the loyalty of the beneficiaries of its services, as the alternative sub-hypotheses adopted by the study were fulfilled, which are:

- ✓ **The First Sub-Hypothesis (H<sub>A1</sub>):** There is a positive relationship between the analysis of the environment of the libraries of the University of Ghardaia and the loyalty of the beneficiaries of the library services.
- ✓ **The Second Sub-Hypothesis (H<sub>B2</sub>):** There is a positive relationship between planning and formulating the objectives of the communication strategy at the level of the libraries of the University of Ghardaia and the loyalty of the beneficiaries of its services.

✓ **The Third Sub-Hypothesis (H<sub>3</sub>):** There is a positive relationship between the process of evaluating the communication strategy at the level of the libraries of the University of Ghardaia and the loyalty of the beneficiaries of its services.

The problem of the study crystallized around addressing the extent to which the communication strategy of libraries at Ghardaia University contributes to enhancing loyalty behavior among beneficiaries of its services. The results reached and the results of testing the study hypotheses proved that the communication strategy of university libraries is a vital tool within the library's activities to gain and enhance the loyalty of beneficiaries by building trust with them, improving their experiences, and enhancing their belonging to the library. This was confirmed by the most important results reached:

❖ The results related to the reality of the communication strategy at the level of Ghardaia University libraries indicated a high level of satisfaction among students with various aspects of the communication strategy adopted in Ghardaia University libraries.

❖ The results related to the reality of the loyalty of beneficiaries to the libraries of the University of Ghardaia indicated a high level of loyalty among students towards the library. This was reflected in the students' desire to visit the library and their positive talk about it with their colleagues.

❖ The respondents expressed their satisfaction with the library's stock as well as the way the staff of the Ghardaia University libraries treated them through the speed of response in providing the required information sources after submitting their request.

❖ The communication strategy of Ghardaia University Libraries has contributed to increasing the percentage of regular visits and the demand for library services by beneficiaries.

❖ The communication strategy of Ghardaia University Libraries has enhanced the satisfaction of beneficiaries and raised their level of loyalty by responding to all beneficiaries' requirements and aspirations.

This study contributes to the existing literature in presenting the contemporary roles of university libraries in light of current challenges, by providing a new vision for understanding the relationship between the communication strategy of university libraries and the loyalty behavior of beneficiaries of their services. Although there are previous studies that addressed topics related to communication, marketing, service quality, beneficiary satisfaction and methods of measuring it and beneficiary loyalty, they did not focus specifically on the role of the communication strategy in university libraries in building and enhancing beneficiary loyalty. The study also highlights the importance of libraries adopting effective communication strategies, specifically designed to meet the needs of beneficiaries and increase their interaction with the library. It also puts forward recommendations regarding the continuous development or periodic re-evaluation of the communication strategy of university libraries in order to enhance the loyalty of beneficiaries of their services.

The study was limited to a sample of Ghardaia University students, which limits the generalization of the results to all university libraries. The study also did not measure the impact, in addition to its focus on surveying students' opinions only without taking into account the opinions of librarians because they are directly concerned with the loyalty variable.

We can suggest future prospects for research as follows:

- Deepening research into specific aspects of communication strategy, such as the use of social media and its impact on beneficiary loyalty.
- Studying the relationship between library culture and its impact on beneficiary satisfaction.
- Exploring the role of modern technology in developing effective communication strategies in university libraries.
- Conducting comparative studies between different university libraries to know and understand the best factors that allow for the development of their communication strategies.
- Studying the impact of social media on the loyalty of library beneficiaries.

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