

The Impact of Fee Based Library Services in University Libraries in Makurdi Metropolis

Mwuese S. Igyuve¹ and Doosuur D. Ashaver²

^{1&2}Librarian I, University Library, Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria

E-mail: sanwuese@yahoo.com, dashaver@bsum.edu.ng

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Abstract – Fee based library services give an increased ability to serve larger clientele satisfactorily with the services they render and this is made possible with resource sharing. Fee based services enables libraries to offer services to library users and others that would not otherwise have been able to provide and brings in a useful amount of extra income that is ploughed back into library service aimed at satisfying users better. However, it is believed that there have been factors militating against these important fee based library services such as lack of professional and non-professional staff. The paper therefore looks at the impact of fee based library services on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and simple random sampling technique was used in drawing a sample size of 384 library staff and users. Mean and standard deviation statistics were used to answer research questions while Chi-Square was used for testing the hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance. It was discovered that fee based library services have positively impact on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. The study recommended that it is no more ample to justify the existence of university libraries just on the basis that they provide for the community of users' information needs and are guardians of culture and research findings, these libraries have to survive and it will be proper to introduce more fee based library services to generate extra funds for the upkeep and survival of the university libraries.

Keywords: Fee Based, Library Services, University Libraries, Service charging.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nigerian university libraries have funding challenges and as a result, their current funding does not adequately fulfill their needs thereby allowing their future to appear miserable. Therefore, it is not in the least likely to consider

fee-based services to be a good alternative to university libraries funding. However, these services are not common in Nigerian university libraries especially those in Makurdi Metropolis. Imperatively, there are no comprehensive surveys carried out with respect to fee-based services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.

University libraries can enlarge their client base by charging fees for providing services to professional and remote users who need quick information research and document delivery, but who are not affiliated members of the university's community. Many university libraries already provide limited information services to non-primary clientele without compensation. The value that libraries add is access (since they have purchased or leased the requisite hardware, software, and telecommunications), a user-friendly gateway, and knowledge brokers who can navigate the increasingly complex network of global information resources, (McDaniel & Epp, 1995).

Fee Based Library Services

Jenda (2000) posits that fee based services are library services such as research book loans and article delivery provided for a fee to identifiable user groups which may or may not be an institutional primary clientele. Fee based services are not new in libraries as library users are charged for certain services rendered to them. They enable libraries to offer services to library users and others as well as bring in a useful amount of extra income that is ploughed back into the library service aimed at satisfying users better.

Reitz (2004) sees fee based services as an information service provided by a library or information brokers in exchange for monetary payment. Fee-based services are recognized as alternative funding sources for libraries

world-wide, (Mahmood, Hameed&Haider, 2005). Anyaoku (2012) opined that fee based services in the library context is the demand for financial payment for services and products offered to users.

Areas that fee based services are rendered are, fines for late returns of borrowed materials, document delivery, journal article delivery, inter library loan, health information services, patents, trademarks, computer searches, research services customer service skills, knowledge of collections and information sources, interpersonal and communication skills among others.

The Impact of Fee Based Library Services

The library of today is a dynamic and challenging environment that offers many opportunities to librarians. The paradigm shift to electronic resources has made library patrons to seek for information in different formats. This fast paced, interactive environment that is always changing has made it possible for libraries and librarians to charge for library services in order to meet the increasing needs of their users or else they would remain irrelevant.

Fee based library services helps you transform your library services with the latest technological devices. There is an increased ability to serve a larger clientele and it is a source of income for the library and the information broker. Fee based library services enables all other employers to focus on serving primary users, as well as releasing staff from the strain of responding to outside user groups at the same time.

Apparently, fees used to aid in the transition towards electronic media and digitalization, increases library hours and improves information technology services. It also strengthens opportunities for research and to pay for technical assistance rendered. It enhances access to both electronic and print material collections. It maintains open access and availability while charging for extraordinary and often costly services. It translates the new found knowledge of unmet needs into service delivery.

Mahmood, Hameed and Haider (2005) acknowledged the role and usefulness of fee based library services and itemized them as: Fees limit waste and over use of library services, With fees, the clients feel that they have acquired

something that has value and is of high quality, Fees are justifiable because the results for using information will benefit individuals, The demand for fee-based services is a measure of the necessity of library services. This will help management better plan for future needs, when fees are charged, services are managed more efficiently. Competition increases the efficiency, Increasing costs has made user fees a necessity, With fees, new services can be started, People already pay user fees for a number of public services (e.g. parks, museums, bridges, highways) although they are supported by taxes. They should also pay for library and information services and if fees are not collected, some of the costly services could be abused and thus become a drain on the budget.

II. CHALLENGES OF FEE BASED LIBRARY SERVICES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIE

There are a number of problems which create barriers in providing information services to users such as user education, lack of professional and non- professional staff, policy matters, lack of autonomy for the library professionals, etc. It is very difficult to make available all the desired documents to users at user's demand while purchasing new books, periodicals and other print and non-print information.

Fee based library services enables easy accesses to information. Users who are not close by are reached. Remote access to information about a collection depends on the degree to which a library has automated its catalogue. Computerized catalogues are the norms and retrospective conversion makes the entire collection available and makes access relatively easy. The problem is that computerization of library catalogues is not widespread and access is relatively difficult.

Mason(2010) reported that there are many libraries in the world that rely on card catalogue, this makes networking and sharing information difficult for users. There are still problems to solve in the ages of electronic access. Some people want information but are unwilling to spend money to get the needed information. Some people are willing to spend money to save time and get results.

Fee based services requires developing new skills and the challenges of change. If the librarian or information broker must be relevant in the 21st century they need to appropriate staff skill and constant training to meet up with the demands of library users. Lack of cooperation with other academic libraries makes networking development to be uneven. The ability to deliver documents when requested and identified depends mostly on staff availability than on any factor. Since most of these materials requested for are not all available in an electronic format, their use rest on an individual library and library staff who either copy or mail the required documents to users.

Libraries are universal both in not excluding any type of knowledge and in providing and accessing knowledge worldwide. This is as a result of the increased co-operation made possible through new technologies. The costs of acquiring these technologies are expensive and sometimes most libraries cannot afford them because of the limited funds. Cooperation with other libraries to share and disseminate information is a necessity if any library must be effective, but cooperation with other libraries depends on a whole lot of things apart from the quality of a library's collection. It requires access to holdings of libraries. Most libraries are yet to fully migrate to electronic. This makes access to their collections difficult for library users and staff. There are couple of problems that needs to be solved in the age of electronic access, the challenges of change requires cooperation especially for academic libraries that have limited resources. Collaboration enables libraries to help each other with enquiries and lending materials. It enables libraries keep in touch with users' needs and demands, changing needs and with the trends in information supply and provision. Cooperation will save cost of procurement of library equipment and avoid unnecessary duplications. This would maintain a balance between what is to be charged as fee and what services would be seen as free.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Fee based library services give an increased ability to serve larger clientele satisfactorily with the services they render and this is made possible with resource sharing. Fee based services enables libraries to offer services to library users and others that would not otherwise have been able to provide and brings in a useful amount of extra income that is

ploughed back into library service aimed at satisfying users better. However, it is believed that there have been factors militating against these important fee based library services such as lack of lack of professional and non-professional staff and if the trend is allowed to continue, academic libraries' users will be denied access to vital information they need that some of the libraries do not acquire, in the near future. The paper therefore, intends to investigate the impact of fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.

IV. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study intends to investigate the contribution of fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis. Specifically, the study sought to:

- (1) Find out the types of fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis.
- (2) Identify the impact of fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis
- (3) Investigate factors militating against fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis.
- (4) Find out strategies that will be used in encouraging fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis.

Research Questions

- (5) What are the types of fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis?
- (6) What is the impact of fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis?
- (7) Are there factors militating against fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis?
- (8) What are the strategies that will be used in encouraging fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis?

V. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- (1) Fee based library services have no significant impact on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis
- (2) There are no significant factors militating against fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis

VI. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The target population of this study was library staff and library users in University Libraries in Makurdi metropolis of Benue State. There are two (2) university libraries in Makurdi metropolis, one in Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi and the other is Benue State University Makurdi, with the population of 62,819. The university library at the Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi has 117 staff and 60,000 users while the university library at the Benue State University Makurdi has 98 staff with 2,604 users respectively. The researchers selected 58 library staff and 326 library users using simple random sampling technique. Therefore, the sample size of 384 from the selected local governments was drawn using the sample size method.

The instrument used for data collection was Fee Based Library Service in University Libraries Questionnaire (FBLSULQ) constructed by the researchers. Section A of the questionnaire was on bio-data, which included sex, occupation and institution. Section B consist 5 variables of types of fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. Section C consist 5 variables of the role of fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi. Section D consist 6 variables of factors militating against fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. Section E consist also of 6 variables of

strategies that will be used in encouraging fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. The 22 item questionnaire adapted a 4 point Likert rating scale. Respondents were asked to respond by ticking the correct or applicable responses (SA) strongly agree, (A) agree, (D) disagree and (SD) strongly disagree. Mean and standard deviation were used for the analysis. Therefore, any item of the instrument whose mean rating scores is 2.50 and above was considered significant and any item that was less than 2.50 was not considered significant.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS

Data were collected using 4 point Likert rating scale instrument. On each research question, data were collected on related items in the instrument. The collected data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Any item of the instrument whose mean rating scores is 2.50 and above was considered significant and any item that was less was not considered significant.

Research Question 1

What are the types of fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis?

To answer the research question, data were collected on the types of fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. The collected data were analyzed and presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF TYPES OF FEE BASED LIBRARY SERVICES IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN MAKURDI METROPOLIS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Fines for late returns of borrowed library materials	384	2.7865	1.26871
Research book loans	384	2.6016	1.30878
Journal articles delivery	384	2.5182	1.38424
Classification of books for other libraries and organizations	384	2.9141	1.16539
Cataloguing of books for other libraries and organizations	384	2.8932	1.36022
Valid N (listwise)	384		

From Table 1, it can be seen that the mean rating scores of all the items are above 2.50, which means respondents have agreed that fines for late returns of borrowed library materials, research book loans, journal articles delivery, classification of books for other libraries and cataloguing of books for other libraries and organizations are the types of fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.

Research Question 2

What is the impact of fee based library services on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis?

To answer the research question, data were collected on the impact of fee based library services on universities libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. The collected data were analyzed and presented in Table 2.

TABLE II DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF TYPES OF THE IMPACT OF FEE BASED LIBRARY SERVICES ON UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN MAKURDI METROPOLIS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Fee based library services helps you transform your library services with the latest technological devices	384	3.2995	1.08462
Fee based library services increase the ability of the university library to serve a larger clientele	384	2.8177	1.25084
With fees, the clients feel that they have acquired something that has value and is of high quality	384	3.1224	1.08785
Fees limit waste and over use of library services and staff therefore minimizes cost	384	3.2448	1.04593
If fees are not collected, some of the costly services could be abused and thus become a drain on the budget	384	3.2057	1.06296
Valid N (listwise)	384		

From Table 2, it can be seen that the mean rating scores of all the items are above 2.50. This means that fee based library services helps you transform your library services with the latest technological devices, fee based library services increase the ability of the university library to serve a larger clientele, with fees, the clients feel that they have acquired something that has value and is of high quality, fees limit waste and over use of library services and staff, therefore minimizes cost and if fees are not collected, some of the costly services could be abused and thus become a drain on the budget are the evidence of the impact of fee

based library services on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.

Research Question 3

Are there factors militating against fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis?

To answer the research question, data were collected on factors militating against fee based library services in universities libraries in Makurdi Metropolis, analyzed and presented in Table 3.

TABLE III DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST FEE BASED LIBRARY SERVICES IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN MAKURDI METROPOLIS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lack of professional and non- professional staff	384	3.6510	.47726
Policy matters	384	2.8385	1.17412
Lack of autonomy for the library professionals	384	3.6823	.46619
Lack of technical skills	384	3.1615	.68171
Lack of cooperation with other university libraries	384	2.9271	.55496
Cost of acquiring new technologies that will enable easy inter library cooperation	384	3.6823	.73559
Valid N (listwise)	384		

Table 3 shows the mean rating scores of all the items above 2.50. This means that lack of professional and non-professional staff, policy matters, lack of autonomy for the library professionals, lack of technical skills, lack of cooperation with other university libraries and cost of acquiring new technologies that will enable easy inter library cooperation are the factors militating against fee based library services in universities libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.

Research Question 4

What are the strategies that will be used in encouraging fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis?

In order to answer the research, data were collected on the strategies that will be used in encouraging fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. The collected data were analyzed and presented in Table 4.

TABLE IV DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE FEE BASED LIBRARY SERVICES IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN MAKURDI METROPOLIS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employment of adequate professional and non- professional staff	384	3.1719	.67529
Making of good policies to support fee based library services by the library's host institutions and stakeholders	384	2.7995	.97964
Mother institution of the library and stakeholders should grant autonomy for the library professionals	384	3.6198	.61845
There should be training of staff to acquire technical skills	384	3.8672	.47448
There should be understanding among university libraries by making policies to support the agreement between the libraries	384	2.8125	1.22047
Mother institutions of the libraries should provide adequate funds for acquiring new technologies that will enable easy inter library cooperation	384	3.4740	.82983
Valid N (listwise)	384		

In Table 4, it can be seen that the mean rating scores of all the items are above 2.50, which means that employment of adequate professional and non- professional staff, making of good policies to support fee based library services by the library's host institutions and stakeholders, mother institution of the library and stakeholders should grant autonomy for the library professionals, there should be training of staff to acquire technical skills, there should be understanding among university libraries by making policies to support the agreement between the libraries and mother institutions of the libraries should provide adequate funds for acquiring new technologies that will enable easy inter library cooperation are the strategies that will be used in encouraging fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.

Research Hypotheses

Hypotheses were formulated to test the significances if there are in the study area. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Since Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) is used for this analysis, the 0.05 is compared with Asymp. Sig (computer calculated probability for decision taking) value denoted as P. Therefore, if P is greater than 0.05 the hypothesis will not be rejected, (Agber & Mngutyô, 2013).

Hypotheses 1

Fee based library services have no significant impact on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis

To test for Hypothesis 1, data on the impact of fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis were collected, analyzed and presented in Table 5.

TABLE V CHI-SQUARE TEST OF OPINION OF RESPONDENTS ON THE IMPACT OF FEE BASED LIBRARY SERVICES ON UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN MAKURDI METROPOLIS

	Observed N	Expected N	χ^2	df	Asymp. Sig	Remarks
Fee based library services have nosignificant impacted on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis	123	192.0	49.594	1	.000	Significant
Fee based library services have significant impact on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis	261	192.0				
Total	105					

From Table 5, it can be seen that 123 with expected frequency of 192.0 respondents were of the opinion that fee based library services have no impact on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis while 261 with expected frequency of 192.0 respondents agreed that fee based library services have significant impact on university libraries in Makurdi

Metropolis. Testing for the difference, $\chi^2 = 49.594$ with $df = 1$ and had computer calculated probability for decision taking (Asymp. Sig.) = .000 = P. Since P is less than 0.05 (significance level) then the difference is significant. The hypothesis is therefore rejected with the conclusion that fee based library services have significant impacted on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.

Hypotheses 2

There are no significant factors militating against fee based library service in university libraries in Makurdi metropolis.

To test for Hypothesis 2, data were collected on factors militating against fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. Essentially, the collected data were analyzed and presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6 CHI-SQUARE TEST OF OPINION OF RESPONDENTS ON FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST FEE BASED LIBRARY SERVICES IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN MAKURDI METROPOLIS

	Observed N	Expected N	χ^2	df	Asymp. Sig	Remarks
There are no factors militating against fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis	15	192.0	326.344	1	.000	Significant
There are significant factors militating against fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis	369	192.0				
Total	105					

From Table 6, it can be seen that 15 with expected frequency of 192.0 respondents were of the opinion that there are no factors militating against fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis while 369 with expected frequency of 192.0 respondents agreed that there are significant factors militating against fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. Testing for the difference, $\chi^2 = 326.344$ with $df = 1$ and had computer calculated probability for decision taking (Asymp. Sig.) = .000 = P. Since P is less than 0.05 (significance level) then the difference is significant. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected with the conclusion that there are significant factors militating against fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.

VIII. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

- (1) Based on the results in Table 1, the findings from the study showed that fines for late returns of borrowed library materials, research book loans, journal articles delivery, classification of books for other libraries and cataloguing of books for other libraries and organizations are the types of fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.
- (2) The findings from the study based on the result in Table 2 showed that fee based library services have significant impact on the university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. The hypothesis was rejected with the conclusion that fee based library services have significant impacted on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.

- (3) Based on the results in Table 3, the study showed that lack of professional and non-professional staff, policy matters, lack of autonomy for the library professionals, lack of technical skills, lack of cooperation with other university libraries and cost of acquiring new technologies that will enable easy inter library cooperation are the factors militating against fee based library services in universities libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. The hypothesis was rejected with the conclusion that there are significant factors militating against fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.
- (4) Based on the result in Table 4, the study also found out that employment of adequate professional and non-professional staff, making of good policies to support fee based library services by the library's host institutions and stakeholders, mother institution of the library and stakeholders should grant autonomy for the library professionals, there should be training of staff to acquire technical skills, there should be understanding among university libraries by making policies to support the agreement between the libraries and mother institutions of the libraries should provide adequate funds for acquiring new technologies that will enable easy inter library cooperation are the strategies that will be used in encouraging fee based library services in university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis.

IX. CONCLUSION

The research finding discovered that fee based library services have significant impact on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. It is therefore recommended that it is no more ample to justify the existence of university libraries just on the basis that they provide for the community of users' information needs and are guardians of culture and research findings, these libraries have to survive, as such fee based library services should be encouraged to generate extra funds for the upkeep and survival of the university libraries, if not they will remain irrelevant to their users

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