

**FEE-BASED LIBRARY SERVICES FOR WEALTH CREATION IN ACADEMIC  
LIBRARIES**

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**Abstract**

The study focused on fee-based library services for wealth creation in academic libraries. Due to the meager library allocation, there is the need for academic libraries to think outside the box. Different fee-based library services were exhaustively discussed and highlighted in the study. They are the bindery unit, photocopying services, internet/typesetting services, membership registration, overdue charges, library clearance, laminating services, library bookshops, editorial work and publishing and printing. The benefits for fee-based library services were spelt out. Challenges affecting fee-based service as well as recommendation were proffered.

**Keywords: Fee-based. Library services, Wealth creation, Academic libraries**

**Introduction**

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. Fee-based services are information services offered by a library or information organization in exchange for money. According to Jenda (2004), fee-based services are library offerings that are made available for a price to certain user groups that may or may not be the institution's main clientele. Since library patrons are charged for some services provided to them, fee-based services are nothing new in libraries. They allow libraries to provide services to both library users and non-users, as well as generate a reasonable amount of additional revenue that is invested back into the library service in an effort to better please users.

Information delivery is becoming a more challenging service for libraries to offer to their patrons. This is a result of the government and other stakeholders' inadequate financial support for libraries. In order to keep up with the current trends in educational, social, technical, and research in our society today, libraries now need to diversify their sources of funding. These changes have made it necessary for our libraries to provide fee-based library services. Universities are not exempt from the economic crisis that has eaten deeply into the Nigerian economy due to the evolving nature of financial instability. The library's small budget makes it difficult to acquire new materials. Because of the volatility in the price of crude oil throughout the world and oil theft, the federal government, which owns federal universities, continues to struggle with financial allocation to ministries and parastatals. Academic libraries may adopt fee-based services for its patrons to lessen the strain caused by their financial difficulties.

The sort of services a library provides in accordance to its customers' demands depends on the nature of the library. Today, the idea of fee-based services is applicable on a worldwide scale. According to Obodoeze (2007), fee-based library services will make it easier for patrons to understand the value of the services provided by libraries and information centers. This demonstrates that due to the strong usage, fee-based library services will preserve the reputation of both libraries and librarians.

The main justification for the introduction of fee-based services is to just extend and make accessible the information that library patrons require. For his side, Namara (2010) sees fee-based services as a set of actions necessary to make sure that librarians continue to serve

their clients' requirements and provide the appropriate value in return. The only method to guarantee that adequate financial resources are made accessible is through fee-based services. Library and affiliated information centers have a duty to their clients, and this obligation can only be properly carried out if sufficient financial resources are made available. Anyaoku (2012) fully agreed that fee-based library services are provided as one of the solutions to increase library finances and handle the difficulties posed by technological advancements. The following services are fee-based library services:

**Bindery:** The lifespan of books and periodicals used in libraries can be extended by the use of library binding. This is accomplished by strengthening the spine of each book and stitching the pages into place. Preservation over the long term is the aim of library binding. The Bindery Unit helps to keep library items preserved. To maintain the durability of library resources, the Unit performs internal treatments on damaged and worn-out items. Using one's hands and equipment, one creates a book of codex manuscripts out of an organized stack of paper sheets. First, a thick needle and sturdy thread are used to tie the paper sheets together along an edge. Additionally available but of shorter duration are loose-leaf rings, binding posts, twin-loop spine coils, plastic spiral coils, and plastic spine combs. The bundled stack of papers is then placed inside of a cover. The next step is to attach a lovely cover to the boards, which includes details about the publisher and decorative elements. If the bindery unit is developed and arranged properly, the library will benefit financially. Student assignments and term papers may also be bound at the library for a fee and to increase its financial resources. The library can as well market itself for commercial patronage.

**Photocopying service:** Photocopying is a process whereby written or printed matter is directly copied by photographic techniques. In most cases, photocopying is advantageous when only a few duplicates of an original are required. Printing techniques are more cost-effective when several copies are needed. The master or stencil needed for a printing process, however, can occasionally be created via photocopying. Silver halide, transfer, plan, thermographic (see thermography), and electrostatic (for example, xerography, which has become so commonplace that the process is almost synonymous with photocopying) are some of the main photocopying methods. Cameras are used in the well-known silver halide procedures of Photostatting and microfilming to create photographic replicas of the original. Money generated from photocopying in the library can serve as internal generated revenue. It is also a source of wealth creation which will support the library in one way or the other.

**Internet/typesetting services:** This service can be rendered for fee in the library. An organization that offers services for utilizing, maintaining, or engaging with the internet is known as an internet service provider. Users of libraries can benefit from the ability to surf the internet and download resources for assignments and other academic projects. The library also offers computerized typesetting, a kind of typesetting in which characters are created by computers and transmitted to light-sensitive paper or film using either laser pulses or shifting light beams from a stroboscopic source. The system consists of a keyboard that generates punched paper or magnetic tape for input, a computer that decides on hyphenation and other end-of-line and page-makeup issues, and a typesetting unit that produces the final product. Students and researchers in this environment can patronize this section of the library by sending their term

papers, projects, assignment for typesetting as well as using the internet to source for information to satisfy their immediate needs.

**Membership registration:** All potential users of the library are required to register in the library in order to qualify to use its resources. Researchers and professionals from other universities may be permitted to use the library, along with non-students and other people of the university's nearby neighborhood. The library also makes money via the sale of readers' tickets, which in certain libraries are only available for N100 yearly and are renewable. Tickets that are lost or misplaced must be reported right away to the library's circulation desk. The cost of a replacement is N500.00 (Five Hundred Naira only) or the currency equivalent. This might also be a way for the library to make money and grow wealthy.

**Library clearance:** Library clearance is part of the requirements for any student leaving the university and this must be done at the university main library. The reader's ticket must be turned in at the circulation counter in order to receive this clearance. The circulation librarian generates a clearing charge of N200 for undergraduates and N300.00 for postgraduates. If the readers ticket is not shown, there will be an additional price of N1,000.00 (fine), not including the clearing fee. This will be quite advantageous for the university library, especially when there are many graduates.

**Overdue charges:** The library will often impose a fine if someone checks out a book from it and does not return it by the due date. Later, the library will impose a fine that is equivalent to the cost of the book plus the work involved in processing a new copy. Delaying library books after

they are due is a common practice among users, and doing so will undoubtedly result in punishment. The amount charged is used to compute the number of days that the library materials may be checked out for. This may assist the library in generating additional funds for wealth creation since there are likely many defaulters to this.

**Laminating services:** Laminating is the process through which two or more flexible packaging webs are joined together using a bonding agent. The substrates making up the webs may consist of films, papers, or aluminum foils. The life of the printed items is increased by the strength, stiffness, and protection provided by this transparent coating. Additionally, lamination improves the aesthetic of the printing by bringing out the depth and brightness of the ink colors. The following are a few advantages of lamination in libraries for generating wealth: Lamination improves appearance by enhancing the ink colors of the printed piece. Lamination increases the durability of print materials, allowing them to withstand frequent use. Lamination also adds protection against fingerprints and smudges, spills and stains, tears and wrinkles, marks and abrasions, as well as oil, grease, dirt, moisture, and other contaminants. Lamination gives any document a sense of better quality and significance by adding firmness and stiffness, which gives it a more professional appearance and keeps the viewer's attention for longer. Libraries are expected to make good money from this service if implemented.

**Library bookshops:** The library bookshops are critical in any academic environment. Libraries can venture into selling of all books and stationeries in the library. This in turn will help them to raise funds to manage the library effectively. A book store has multiple benefits, providing

quality information to all the book lovers in search of knowledge, entertainment and even insight. A franchised book store further adds to these benefits for a franchisee as he gets along a brand backing which aids in getting more customers and popularity. Proceeds gotten from the sales of books from the library bookshop can also serve as sources of internal revenue for the library.

**Editorial work:** Librarians can engage themselves as an editor to others as a source of fee based services in the library. The publishing of articles and other written content is a component of an editorial position. The publication process involves a variety of editorial tasks, from authoring and editing through the actual release of final content. An editor is in charge of a certain topic, such as regional news, world news, features, or sports. The majority of assistant editors work for newspapers, television stations, magazines, book publishers, or businesses that specialize in advertising and public relations. They also proofread texts for grammar, punctuation, and spelling problems as well as for readability, style, and compliance with editorial guidelines. To increase clarity or correctness, they recommend alterations such word changes and phrase and paragraph rearrangements. Additionally, they could do research, validate their sources, and validate data, dates, and statistics. They can also arrange the page layouts for content, images, and advertisements. If taken serious, librarians could earn a lot of proceeds from this, and it will help in creation for wealth for the library.

**Publishing and printing:** The basic difference between these terms is in the fact that printing means producing books while publishing is selling them to interested readers. Libraries could

take this advantage to delve into publishing and printing for wealth creation. Making information, books, music, software, and other content available to the general public on a pay basis is known as publishing. Traditionally, the term refers to the creation and distribution of printed works, such as books, newspapers, and magazine, while printing means reproducing written copies of your book. It involves printing the text of your copy onto paper using a printer, after which the book undergoes the bookbinding process. Libraries and librarians can come together to publish articles, textbooks, newspapers, magazines for fee-based and for wealth creation.

### **Benefits of fee-based library services**

- Fees prevent waste and excessive use of library services.
- The clients believe they have purchased something valuable and of high quality when they pay fees.
- The results of using information will benefit others, hence fees are acceptable.
- . The need for library services is shown by the demand for fee-based services. This will assist management in making better plans for upcoming requirements.
- Services that charge a fee are run more effectively. This effectiveness will rise with competition
- User fees are necessary since costs are rising.
- With fees, many new services can be started.
- Even though they are funded by taxes, a variety of public services (such as parks, museums, bridges, and motorways) need user fees. They should also pay for informational services like libraries.
- Some of the expensive services would be misused and constitute a financial burden if fees weren't collected.



### **Factors affecting fee-based library services**

Mason, (2010) opined that there are numerous challenges inhibiting fee-based library service in academic libraries. They are:

1. Lack of professional and nonprofessional staff
2. Library policy matters
3. Lack of technical skills staff
4. Cost of acquiring new technologies

### **Recommendations**

The study recommends thus:

1. Professional and non professional staff should be recruited for this purpose
2. Library policies can also be amended and revised
3. Technical staff should be recruited or trained if the library wants to embark into this venture
4. Libraries could solicit through grant and philanthropist for this purpose

### **Conclusion**

This study focuses on fee-based library services for wealth creation in academic libraries. Academic libraries such as universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education are significantly impacted by the fee-based library services. As a result, it is advised that the existence of academic libraries should no longer be justified solely on the grounds that they serve the information needs of their users and are stewards of culture and research findings. Instead, it is

suggested that fee-based library services be encouraged in order to raise additional funds for the maintenance and survival of academic libraries, without which they will cease to be useful.

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