

FEE-BASED SERVICES AS A CATALYST FOR ENHANCED SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

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Abstract

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The study examined fee-based services as a catalyst for enhanced service delivery in Nigerian university libraries through the lens of the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory. The survey design was descriptive, and the study population comprises all the librarians working in university libraries in Nigeria. The census sampling technique was adopted, and an online questionnaire was used to collect data. The online questionnaire was administered to the librarians, and 202 completed it, and with that, the analysis was made. Findings revealed that Nigerian university libraries offer a range of fee-based services, including binding, photocopying, and user registration, while other more specific services, such as data analysis and laptop lending, are less offered. Fee-based services have a positive influence on the quality and the efficiency of the delivery of library service, and the number of fee-based services provided will influence the perceived quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries to a very high extent. However, obstacles, such as funding constraints and logistical challenges, price policy uncertainty, accountability and remittance, poor planning, low user awareness, and lack of staff training, impact the effective execution of fee-based services in Nigerian university libraries. The hypothesis test revealed a very strong and significant relationship between the number of fee-based services provided and the quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries. The authors recommended that university libraries in Nigeria should diversify into providing specialized fee-based services, such as data analysis and lending of laptops, with investment in staff training and the provision of ICT infrastructure. Transparency and user confidence will increase as a result of clear policies and pricing structures.

Keywords: *fee-based services, service delivery, university libraries, Nigeria*

Abstrak

Studi ini meneliti layanan berbayar sebagai katalis untuk peningkatan penyampaian layanan di perpustakaan universitas Nigeria melalui lensa teori Resource-Based View (RBV). Desain survei bersifat deskriptif, dan populasi penelitian terdiri dari semua pustakawan yang bekerja di perpustakaan universitas di Nigeria. Teknik pengambilan sampel sensus diadopsi, dan kuesioner daring digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data. Kuesioner daring diberikan kepada pustakawan, dan 202 orang menyelesaikannya, dan dengan itu, analisis dilakukan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa perpustakaan universitas Nigeria menawarkan berbagai layanan berbayar, termasuk penjiilidan, fotokopi, dan pendaftaran pengguna, sementara layanan yang lebih spesifik lainnya, seperti analisis data dan peminjaman laptop, kurang ditawarkan. Layanan berbayar memiliki pengaruh positif terhadap kualitas dan efisiensi penyampaian layanan perpustakaan, dan jumlah layanan berbayar yang disediakan akan sangat memengaruhi persepsi kualitas penyampaian layanan perpustakaan di perpustakaan universitas Nigeria. Namun, hambatan seperti keterbatasan pendanaan dan tantangan logistik, ketidakpastian kebijakan harga, akuntabilitas dan pembayaran, perencanaan yang buruk, kesadaran pengguna yang rendah, dan kurangnya pelatihan staf, berdampak pada pelaksanaan layanan berbayar yang efektif di perpustakaan universitas Nigeria. Pengujian hipotesis mengungkapkan hubungan yang sangat kuat dan signifikan antara jumlah layanan berbayar yang disediakan dan kualitas penyampaian layanan perpustakaan di perpustakaan universitas Nigeria. Para penulis merekomendasikan agar perpustakaan universitas di Nigeria melakukan diversifikasi ke penyediaan layanan berbayar khusus, seperti analisis data dan peminjaman laptop, dengan investasi dalam pelatihan staf dan penyediaan infrastruktur TIK. Transparansi dan kepercayaan pengguna akan meningkat sebagai hasil dari kebijakan dan struktur harga yang jelas.

Kata kunci: layanan berbayar, penyampaian layanan, perpustakaan universitas, Nigeria

1. INTRODUCTION

Libraries in universities serve as an important component and play a central role in the teaching, learning, and research processes. They function as an intellectual center of academic life and provide access to various resources such as books, journals, electronic databases, and multimedia resources (Ogunbodede & Okwu, 2023). In addition to their conventional services, such as lending and reference services, contemporary university libraries have introduced more advanced services, including digital literacy skills, research data management, bibliometrics analysis, institutional repositories, and technology support (Breen et al., 2023; Oghenekaro, 2019; Anyaoku et al., 2015; Kennan et al., 2014). Such changing roles are indicative of the increasing need to have a more dynamic, individualized, and technology-enhanced library service. Nonetheless, it has become extremely difficult to maintain these extended services as funds to finance them become scarce, along with an

increase in the cost of operations. To address the rising financial and service delivery demands, university libraries across the world have adopted fee-based services.

Fee-based services refer to library services offered to certain categories of users at some fee. Igyuve and Ashaver (2014) defined fee-based services as the services provided by the libraries to the specified groups of users at a fee, who may or may not constitute the primary customers of the said institution. The services go beyond the library's basic services and normally encompass special or value-added services such as mediated literature searches, document delivery, premium database access, consultancy, and trainings. This model allows libraries to raise extra funds that will be used to improve their services, update the technology infrastructure, and acquire resources, while students and faculty can still access the core library services at no cost (Agbo et al., 2023). Service delivery, on the other hand, is the competence, accessibility, and promptness of library services in meeting the needs of different users. It is the ability of an academic library to provide relevant, timely, and user-focused services that enhance the overall experience and satisfaction of patrons (Oden & Owolabi, 2021; Agoh & Omekwu, 2021). To provide effective service delivery, library services must be reliable, flexible, affordable, and responsive to changing demands of users and their technological patterns. Therefore, fee-based services are building affordable services in a setting of growing, resource-intensive academic world where a library can now diversify but still protect equal access to key academic resources.

In developed counties, fee-based services have formed an essential part of academic library strategies and approaches, which provide specialized research support, document delivery, premium access to databases, translation, and consultancy services to the external users and professionals outside the core academic environment. They can usually be established in response to certain external needs and organized as cost-recovery and also partial-subsidy ventures, with the goal of expanding the library and allowing it to acquire high-tech and state-of-the-art advanced information resources and keep the high-quality information sources (Moorman & Johnson, 2022; Kung & Chambers, 2019; Ward et al., 2002). Such strategies will promote innovation and boost the profile and role of academic libraries within the larger research community. Fee-based Specialized professional research and document retrieval services serve as a means for libraries to augment traditional funding base and to support the increased demand on high-quality information access, as well as the needs of non-primary clients, including professionals and distant users. This usage exemplifies the demonstration of fee-based models including the New York Public Library and its NYPL Express (Koulikov, 2008). John W. Scott Health Sciences Library of the University of Alberta experimented with a fee-based service model to the Faculty of Nursing, providing such specialized services as literature searches and research analysis in addition to the usual library services. This paradigm allowed the library to expand the range of services offered to patrons in a targeted way, while also increasing its budget and maintaining high-level research services for those patrons (Kung & Chambers, 2019).

Nigerian university libraries, on the contrary, are characterized by constant underfunding and are highly reliant on government subventions and internal allocations,

which are no longer adequate in covering the rising expenses associated with digital resources, technology, and qualified employees (Oyewusi & Oyeboade, 2009; Emojorho, 2004; Aguolu, 1996). The existing financing deficit has negatively affected the capacity of libraries to purchase relevant and current resources, maintain ICT infrastructure, and provide contemporary services, which can lead to stagnated service delivery and lack of user satisfaction (Josiah & Mensah, 2023; Nuhu & Aliyu, 2022; Ejezie & Okeke, 2021; Ishola, 2014). To remedy such limitations, fee-based services have been adopted as an aspirational approach to improving service delivery in Nigerian university libraries, especially amidst constant underfunding and increasing levels of operational costs. Such services could include photocopying, printing, rental of event space, overdue fines, and internet provision and access to specialized research materials to enable the libraries to supplement their revenue that can be invested in the infrastructure, technology, expanding collections, and staff motivation to enhance overall service quality and care as well as satisfaction of users (Akidi & Chukwueke, 2019; Okeke et al., 2015; Ishola, 2014; Anyaoku & Nwosu, 2010).

The experience from both federal and privately owned university libraries in Nigeria reveals that fee-based services are yet to be fully operationalized with formal policies in the libraries but can be used to maintain vital services, guard against service disruptions, and purchase technology (Nuhu & Aliyu, 2022; Okeke et al., 2015). Nevertheless, issues like lack of proper planning, uncertain pricing policy, reluctance of users to pay for services due to long years of free services in libraries, poor user perception, the possibility of locking low-income users, and managerial and accounting difficulties in tracking and utilizing generated revenues to improve services continue to be serious impediments to wider implementation (Akidi & Chukwueke, 2019; Ishola, 2014). Some users are afraid that the introduction of fees will lead to inequality and the lack of access to essential resources among disadvantaged students (Josiah & Mensah, 2023). Policymakers and library administrators are thus urged to implement transparent policies, affordable pricing or subsidized pricing, and secure waivers for essential academic services to ensure equitable access to core academic resources (Nuhu & Aliyu, 2022; Ishola, 2014). Drawing on international best practices, Nigerian university libraries can strategically expand fee-based offerings to foster innovation, broaden outreach, and align more closely with institutional goals, provided these services are carefully managed and integrated with the libraries' mission of supporting teaching, learning, and research (Nuhu & Aliyu, 2022; Anyaoku & Nwosu, 2010; Ishola, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

Nigerian university libraries are grappling with chronic underfunding, outdated infrastructure, and limited access to digital resources, which severely constrain their ability to support teaching, learning, and research in a rapidly evolving academic environment (Sahabi & Otobo, 2022). This ongoing financial deficiency prevents the updating of collections, retention of experienced staff, and the maintenance of ICT facilities, leading to the poor quality of services and a lack of satisfaction among users. Even though the use of fee-based services has the potential to improve service delivery and provide an additional

source of funding to libraries across the world, the adoption of fee-based services in Nigerian university libraries is still very low, and in most cases, it is due to a lack of evident policy framework and pricing mechanisms (Nuhu & Aliyu, 2022; Okeke et al., 2015; Ishola, 2014). In the instances that they do exist, they are often informal and ill-managed and not governed by any formal policy, which results in administrative inefficiencies and a narrow impact. Others are resistance because of the expectation from users that all library services should be free, the possibility of marginalized groups being alienated, and the fact that no user engagement strategies were incorporated. These barriers collectively hinder the institutionalization and effectiveness of fee-based services as a solution to the funding and service delivery crisis in Nigerian university libraries. This paper explores the types of fee-based services, their impact on the quality and efficiency of library services, librarians' perceptions, and the challenges affecting the implementation of fee-based services in Nigerian university libraries.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study;

- What are the types of fee-based services currently offered in Nigerian university libraries?
- What are the impacts of fee-based services on the quality and efficiency of library service delivery?
- To what extent will the number of fee-based services provided influence the perceived quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries?
- What are the challenges affecting the effective implementation of fee-based services in Nigerian university libraries?

Hypothesis

There is no relationship between the number of fee-based services provided and the quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries

2. LITERATURE REVIEW/THEORI

1) Literature Review

Fee-based services currently offered in university libraries

The potential of fee-based library services as a self-help to academic libraries in Nigeria was analyzed by Olaseigbe et al. (2024). It found ten fee-based services, i.e., digitization, research support, citation services, digital literacy trainings and services, virtual reference services, interlibrary loan services, study space anchor, technology lending programs, digital media conversion, and data management and curation services. Similarly, Nuhu and Aliyu (2022) researched the fee-paying e-based information services in the federal

libraries of the universities in Nigeria. The finding of the research was that out of the participating schools of Lagos State, the only university had partially adopted two services (the internet access and loaning of laptops) in the federal university libraries. Along with it, Ejezie and Okeke (2021) also indicated the prospects of the availability and level of utilization of the fee-based services and the hurdles to their use in South-East Nigeria academic libraries that have federally owned status. The finding shows that internet browsing/email, fines on behalf of overdue items, library card reissuing, binding/lamination, etc. are highly used in the federal academic libraries in South-East Nigeria by a very high percentage; the same is applicable to a few of them. Still, on this same point, a research study by Okeke et al. (2015) has explored access to fee-based library services at privatized universities in Anambra State. It has been identified that fee based library services exist in the three private universities being studied but to a very minimal level. These services are the services of binding the books, photocopying, access to the internet, typesetting to a computer, membership subscription fee, and fines for over-due books. Akpom et al. (2023) investigated fee-based services as sources of wealth creation for academic libraries in Nigeria. The study revealed that the libraries under study adopted very few fee-based services: photocopying/reprographic services, library card replacement, fines for overdue items, and binding services. The reviewed studies reveal that while fee-based library services are gradually emerging in Nigerian academic libraries, their adoption remains limited and inconsistent across institutions. Most libraries offer basic services like internet access, photocopying, and fines, with more advanced offerings yet to be widely implemented.

Impact of fee-based services on the quality and efficiency of library service delivery

The study of Odusanya et al. (2024) focused on service delivery by the assessment of the effects of fee-based library services in the libraries of private universities located in Ede in Osun State. The result indicates that the fee-based library services are of some relevance. In the same way, a study by Nuhu and Aliyu (2022) established that in the University of Lagos, the services help the library to make more money, and they enhance the patronage of library users, among others. Likewise, Akidi and Chukwueke (2019) looked into the impacts of fee-based services on library service provision at the Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Library, Umudike. The research findings indicated that despite the limited use of few fee-based library services, it has many implications for the federal university library, like the generation of extra revenue, an increase in library services, goodwill, and patronage, among others. There is also a study conducted by Igyuve and Ashaver (2014), that analyses the effect of fee-based library services on university libraries in Makurdi Metropolis. They were found to impact university libraries positively in Makurdi Metropolis as per fee-based library services. The studies consistently indicate that fee-based library services positively impact service delivery in Nigerian academic libraries by enhancing user patronage, expanding service offerings, and generating additional income.

Relationship between the number of fee-based services offered and the quality of library service delivery in university libraries

It has been shown that increased availability of fee-based services in the university libraries tends to be accompanied by better quality of services. The driver of this improvement is the fact that more revenue is generated, the allocation of resources is enhanced, and the staff gets a chance of advancing their careers. As an example, a similar study in the Library of Gadjah Mada University indicated that after implementation of the service fee system, the service delivery was not only optimized but also improved the intellectual capacity and professionalism of librarians because the staff members were supposed to understand the user needs better and cater to them better since there is a fee payment (Suaidah & Arfa, 2022). On the same note, a study carried out in Makurdi Metropolis university libraries revealed that the fee-based services provided libraries with the ability to serve more people, and income earned through the fees was used to improve user satisfaction level and general service quality (Igyuve & Ashaver, 2014). Further surveys among Nigerians and abroad indicate that fee-charging in Nigerian and international research libraries, using the examples of accessing the internet, offering research support, and document delivery, has been shown to bring revenue, which, through reinvestment, the library can improve by upgrading the facilities, providing more services, and meeting the expectations of the users (Okeke et al., 2015).

In addition, these services often promote greater professionalism among librarians, who must adapt their services to user needs and demonstrate the value of fee-based services (Suaidah & Arfa, 2022; Johannsen, 2004). But this is most felt when services are managed well with transparent prices, policies, and constant contact with the stakeholders. The absence of these aspects can restrict their performance by enabling the presence of such problems as insufficient planning, adverse user perceptions, and unjust access (Okeke et al., 2015; Johannsen, 2004). The international experience also recommends that fee-based services are capable of promoting innovation and knowledge sharing so long as they are applied within the framework of the libraries missions of fair access (Johannsen, 2004). Finally, although it is true that expansion of fee-based services can stimulate positive change in the field of academic library service provision, it will not be successful without careful planning, the use of user feedback, and commitment to the foundational principles of inclusiveness and accessibility (Suaidah & Arfa, 2022; Igyuve & Ashaver, 2014; Kung & Chambers, 2019; Johannsen, 2004).

Challenges affecting the implementation of fee-based services in Nigerian university libraries

The literature discloses various issues that face the implementation of the fee-based library services in academic institutions in Nigeria. Olaseigbe et al. (2024) identified the following key barriers: poor planning, user resistance, and inadequate marketing. On the same note, Nuhu and Aliyu (2022) listed poor planning, improper price policies, and misperceptions of patrons as some of the problems at the University of Lagos. Odusanya et

al. (2024) understood that quality services were absent, there was a resistance to the concept, there was a lack of marketing skills, and there was dissatisfaction among the third and fourth-year students of both universities in Ede. Ejezie and Okeke (2021) identified copyright infringement, lack of marketing skills, and no policy in place, as well as lack of materials in federal academic libraries in South-East Nigeria. Okeke et al. (2015) found out that poor organization and lack of accountability were caused by the absence of a formal policy in libraries of private universities in the Anambra State of Nigeria. According to Akpom et al. (2023), the significant barriers include policy gaps, inaccessible ICT, insufficient infrastructure, insufficient awareness, and irregular power supply. Similarly, poor planning, pricing problems, and lack of quality products became an issue in the top University of Agriculture Library, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, and some did not appreciate the fee-based model (Akidi and Chukwueke, 2019). Although the possible benefits have been documented, structural, perceptual, and operational challenges are the major impediments to the success of fee-based library services in Nigerian academic libraries.

2) Theoretical Framework

The study uses the Resource-Based View (RBV), proposed by Jay Barney (1991), which suggests that any organization can develop a sustainable competitive advantage through the appropriate management of its internal resources, which are valuable, rare, non-substitutable, and inimitable. The idea of fee-based services in the framework of the Nigerian university library would act as strategic internal services in providing improved services to their users and provide revenues and excellence to their institutions. The kinds of services offered in most libraries in Nigeria include photocopying, printing, binding, internet connectivity, fines on overdue books, consultation services, and access to exclusive high-value digital materials. These services are tangible (equipment, infrastructure) and intangible (expertise, access to special information) resources that are part of the operative capacities of the library.

In addition, within the RBV, the revenue produced by fee-based services can be considered an internal financial resource that would enable libraries to upgrade infrastructure, increase the collections, upgrade technology, and train their staff. This led to the increase in the quality and responsiveness of the library services that helps to reach the competitive positions in the academic world. The RBV theory supports the view that expanding and strategically managing fee-based services enhances the library's internal resource base, correlating positively with improved service quality and efficiency.

Ultimately, librarians often perceive fee-based services as pragmatic responses to funding constraints, aligning with RBV's emphasis on leveraging internal strengths. However, issues such as user resistance, lack of policy, pricing difficulties, and ethical concerns about access remain significant challenges. These factors hinder full resource optimization as envisioned by the RBV. Overcoming implementation barriers through policy, training, and user engagement is crucial for translating these services into sustained competitive advantage.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study applied the descriptive survey. All librarians working in university libraries in Nigeria formed the study population. The census method of sampling was applied, and 202 librarians were sampled. The data were collected with an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed through both the LinkedIn and the WhatsApp platforms of the Nigerian Library Association, which are restricted to librarians. The questionnaire was also sent privately to the respondents to encourage timely responses. The respondents were given one month, from April 1st to May 1st, 2025, to respond to the questionnaire. It was stated on the questionnaire that the respondents should not fill it out more than once. However, out of the librarians who received the questionnaire, 202 completed it, and with that, the analysis was made. The distribution of the questionnaire was done ethically in the research process. The researcher would first of all explain himself and the purpose of the research to the respondents and gain their consent. All the respondents who took part in filling in the questionnaire did so voluntarily.

The face and content validity tests administered by experts in the fields of measurement and evaluation, library, and information science establish that the questionnaire used was suitable for the study. To ensure that the instrument was reliable, a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.83 was obtained. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data, while hypothesis testing was conducted using the Pearson Product Moment Correlations (PPMC) via SPSS version 29. A nominal scale and 4-point Likert-type scale were used to measure and analyze responses to the questionnaire. The research questions (1-4) adopted a criterion score of 2.5. The criterion score was calculated by dividing the total by 4, where the sum was (4 + 3 + 2 + 1) divided by 4, or the criterion score = $(4 + 3 + 2 + 1)/4 = 2.5$. For research questions 1 and 4, the mean scores less than 2.5 were taken as disagreement, and the mean scores between 2.5 and above were taken as agreement. Regarding research question 2, the mean response below 2.5 was considered negative impact, and the mean scores between 2.5 and above were positive impact. For research question 3, the mean response below 2.5 was considered low extent, and the mean response between 2.5 and 3.0 was considered high extent, while the mean response of 3.1 and above was considered very high.

Section A: Demographic Information

Analysis and Presentation of Data

Table 1: Gender of the respondents

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage % |
|--------|-----------|--------------|
| Male | 108 | 53 |
| Female | 94 | 47 |
| Total | 202 | 100 |

The finding shows that the majority of the respondents are male.

Answering research questions

Based on the posed research questions, the findings of this study are discussed in this part. Tables 2-6 present the findings.

Research Question 1: What are the types of fee-based services currently offered in Nigerian university libraries?

Table 2: Types of Fee-Based Services

| S/N | Types of fee-based services | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | S.D. |
|-----|-----------------------------|-----|----|----|----|------------|-------------|
| 1. | Binding services | 121 | 51 | 20 | 10 | 3.4 | 0.86 |
| 2. | Photocopying services | 121 | 51 | 20 | 10 | 3.4 | 0.86 |
| 3. | Registration of users | 121 | 51 | 20 | 10 | 3.4 | 0.86 |
| 4. | Printing services | 101 | 61 | 30 | 10 | 3.3 | 0.88 |
| 5. | Hiring of library space | 71 | 61 | 51 | 19 | 2.9 | 0.99 |
| 6. | Internet browsing services | 71 | 61 | 51 | 19 | 2.9 | 0.99 |
| 7. | Consultancy services | 71 | 61 | 51 | 19 | 2.9 | 0.99 |
| 8. | Abstracting services | 71 | 61 | 51 | 19 | 2.9 | 0.99 |
| 9. | Data analysis | 40 | 51 | 71 | 40 | 2.5 | 1.02 |
| 10. | Inter-library loan services | 40 | 51 | 71 | 40 | 2.5 | 1.02 |
| 11. | Laptop lending services | 40 | 51 | 71 | 40 | 2.5 | 1.02 |
| 12. | Translation services | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 13. | Others | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Grand Mean | | | | | 2.9 | 0.95 |

All the items in Table 2 have mean values equal to or above the criterion mean of 2.5, except for items 12 and 13, which have no reported values. The overall grand mean of 2.9 further shows that Nigerian university libraries offer a range of fee-based services. Traditional services, such as binding, photocopying, and user registration, are the most commonly provided, as shown by their high score means. In contrast, more specialized services like data analysis and laptop lending are less commonly provided, indicating either resource limitations or institutional priorities.

Research Question 2: What are the impact of fee-based services on the quality and efficiency of library service delivery?

Table 3: Impact of Fee-Based Services

| S/N | Impact of fee-based services | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | S.D. |
|-----|---|-----|----|----|----|------|------|
| 1. | Fee-based services have helped the library in better meeting the diverse needs of its user community. | 130 | 54 | 18 | - | 3.6 | 0.65 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----|-----|----|----|------------|-------------|
| 2. | Fee-based services contribute to improving the overall quality of services provided by the library. | 128 | 54 | 20 | - | 3.5 | 0.67 |
| 3. | The implementation of fee-based services has resulted in quicker response times to user requests and queries. | 110 | 92 | - | - | 3.5 | 0.50 |
| 4. | Users perceive fee-based services as valuable additions to the free services offered by the library. | 74 | 110 | 18 | - | 3.3 | 0.62 |
| 5. | Fee-based services enhance the accessibility and availability of resources for users. | 110 | 56 | 18 | 18 | 3.3 | 0.96 |
| 6. | Users who utilize fee-based services are more satisfied with the library's offerings compared to non-users. | 112 | 36 | 36 | 18 | 3.2 | 1.02 |
| | Grand Mean | | | | | 3.4 | 0.74 |

Table 3 reveals that all 6 items are above the criterion mean of 2.5 and, with a grand mean of 3.4. This implies that respondents feel that fee-based services have a positive impact on the quality and effectiveness of service delivery. Particularly, it is felt that fee-based services can increase responsiveness and the quality of services, address the needs of different users, and enrich the current free services. The mean values of most of the items are relatively high, which suggests a general agreement on their importance to enhance user satisfaction and access to resources.

Research Question 3: To what extent will the number of fee-based services provided influence the perceived quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries?

Table 4: Extent of Fee-Based Services on the Quality of Library Service Delivery

| S/N | Fee-Based Services and Quality of Library Service Delivery | VH | H | L | VL | Mean | S.D. |
|-----|---|-----|-----|----|----|------|------|
| 1. | Libraries with diverse fee-based services show better adaptability to user needs | 117 | 82 | 3 | - | 3.6 | 0.52 |
| 2. | There is a positive correlation between the availability of fee-based services and the overall service quality in academic libraries. | 128 | 56 | 18 | - | 3.5 | 0.65 |
| 3. | Academic libraries that offer fee-based services tend to have higher user satisfaction levels. | 94 | 108 | - | - | 3.5 | 0.50 |
| 4. | Effective service delivery in academic libraries is significantly influenced by the provision of fee-based services. | 110 | 74 | 18 | - | 3.5 | 0.65 |
| 5. | The presence of fee-based services enhances the overall reputation and image of academic libraries. | 128 | 54 | 20 | - | 3.5 | 0.67 |
| 6. | Fee-based services contribute to innovation in library service delivery | 101 | 77 | 22 | 2 | 3.4 | 0.85 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|----|-----|----|----|------------|-------------|
| 7. | Libraries offering fee-based services are more likely to receive positive feedback | 76 | 103 | 22 | 1 | 3.3 | 0.74 |
| 8. | Fee-based services improve user engagement and retention | 70 | 117 | 15 | - | 3.3 | 0.56 |
| 9. | Fee-based services play a crucial role in supporting the academic mission of libraries. | 94 | 54 | 54 | | 3.2 | 0.83 |
| 10. | Libraries that invest in fee-based services are perceived as more proactive and responsive to user needs. | 92 | 72 | 20 | 18 | 3.2 | 0.94 |
| 11. | Fee-based services help libraries maintain relevance in the digital age | 61 | 104 | 34 | 3 | 3.1 | 0.78 |
| | Grand Mean | | | | | 3.4 | 0.70 |

All the items in Table 4 have mean values above the criterion mean of 2.5, with an overall grand mean of 3.4. This implies that the number of fee-based services provided will influence the perceived quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries to a very high extent. The data indicate that libraries that provide a broader range of fee-based services will be more adaptive, innovative, and capable of satisfying user needs, overall satisfaction, and support academic objectives.

Research Question 4: What are the challenges affecting the effective implementation of fee-based services in Nigerian university libraries?

Table 5: Challenges affecting the effective Implementation of Fee-Based Service

| S/N | Challenges | SA | A | D | SD | Mean | S.D. |
|-----|---|-----|-----|----|----|------------|-------------|
| 1. | Limited funding or budget constraints hinder the development and expansion of fee-based services. | 168 | 36 | - | - | 3.8 | 0.38 |
| 2. | There are logistical challenges in implementing and managing fee-based services effectively. | 110 | 92 | - | - | 3.5 | 0.50 |
| 5. | The problem of pricing policy | 92 | 110 | - | - | 3.5 | 0.50 |
| 6. | Problem of accountability/remittance | 92 | 92 | 18 | - | 3.4 | 0.64 |
| 7. | Poor planning | 92 | 92 | 18 | - | 3.4 | 0.64 |
| 3. | Marketing fee-based services to potential users is difficult due to lack of awareness or interest. | 72 | 110 | 20 | - | 3.3 | 0.62 |
| 4. | Lack of additional training for staff members or resources to deliver fee-based services efficiently. | 74 | 110 | 18 | - | 3.3 | 0.62 |
| | Grand Mean | | | | | 3.4 | 0.56 |

Table 5 shows that all seven items have mean values above the criterion mean of 2.5, with an overall grand mean of 3.4. This indicates that respondents widely recognize these factors as challenges affecting the effective implementation of fee-based services in Nigerian university libraries. The most prominent challenges identified include limited funding, logistical difficulties, unclear pricing policies, accountability and remittance issues,

and poor planning. Other challenges, such as low user awareness and lack of staff training, were also noted, though with slightly lower mean scores.

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the number of fee-based services offered and the quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries.

Table 6: Relationship between the number of fee-based services offered and the quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries

| Variable | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | R | p-value | Remark |
|-------------------------------------|------|--------------------|-----|------|---------|-------------|
| Number of fee-based services | 31.9 | 10.5 | | | | |
| Quality of library service delivery | 37.4 | 7.7 | 202 | 0.91 | 0.0001 | Significant |

$\alpha = 0.05$

Table 6 demonstrates a positive, very strong correlation of 0.91 and a p-value of 0.0001. Testing the hypothesis at the 0.05 level, the p-value is less than the alpha value of 0.05. This means that there is a significant correlation, and the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a positive, very strong, and statistically significant correlation between the number of fee-based services offered and the quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries in this study. This suggests that as the quality or variety of fee-based services increases, so does the perceived quality of library service delivery. This implies that offering more fee-based services significantly enhances the quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries.

4. DISCUSSION

Research question one shows that Nigerian university libraries offer a range of fee-based services.

The most common services availed are the traditional ones, i.e., binding, photocopying, and user registration, as indicated by the high mean scores of these services. On the contrary, other more specific services such as data analysis and laptop lending are less offered, suggesting the lack of resources or institutional priorities. This means that although Nigerian university libraries have adopted the fee-based services but, they are inclined towards traditional services and low-cost services. The lack of more specific services may imply barriers, such as insufficient resources, lack of expertise, or institutional priorities, that can obstruct the growth and diversification of services provided. The finding conforms with the RBV Theory, which confirmed that the type of services offered by libraries in Nigeria usually includes photocopying, printing, binding, internet access, and overdue fines, with some offering services like research consultation and premium digital access. The result is similar to the one already found by Okeke et al. (2015), who identified that book-binding services, photocopying services, internet connectivity, computer typesetting,

membership registration fees, and overdue book charges were some of the fee-based services existent in the libraries.

The second research question demonstrated that the respondents believe that fee-based services have a positive influence on the quality and the efficiency of the delivery of library service. In particular, fee-based services are regarded as increasing responsiveness, service quality, and fulfillment of the needs of different users and as supplementing the existing free services. This means that librarians support the idea of fee-based services as playing a significant role in improving the quality and efficiency of service delivery in the libraries. Their opinions show that such services contribute to the perceptions of libraries addressing the needs of the users more efficiently, raising the quality of services, and being great additions to the traditional free services. This observation corroborates the RVB theory, which argued that the revenue earned from fee-based services is an internal financial resource, which enables libraries to advance infrastructure, increase collections, enhance technology, and train personnel, which increases the quality and responsiveness of library services. The outcome is in agreement with other authors who found that fee-based services had a positive influence on university libraries regarding the increased user patronage, widening service offers, and bringing new funds to the institution (Nuhu & Aliyu, 2022; Akidi & Chukwueke, 2019; Igyuve & Ashaver, 2014).

The third research question shows that the number of fee-based services provided will influence the perceived quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries to a very high extent. The data indicate that libraries that provide a broader range of fee-based services will be more adaptive, innovative, and capable of satisfying user needs, overall satisfaction, and support academic objectives. This means that there is a strong relationship between the rising number of fee-based services provided by Nigerian university libraries and the perception of the quality of services by users. This implies that the libraries that invest in quality user-oriented fee-based services are more likely to increase user satisfaction, innovation, and their ability to contribute to the academic goals of their institutions. The discovery is consistent with the RBV theory, which supports the view that expanding and strategically managing fee-based services enhances the library's internal resource base, correlating positively with improved service quality and efficiency. This observation is congruent with Nuhu and Aliyu (2022), who concluded that the partial implementation of fee-based has brought about the fact that it has generated more income, as well as people using the facility, thus boosting the enhancement of infrastructure and quality of service.

Research question four demonstrates that there are some obstacles that impact the effective execution of fee-based services in Nigerian university libraries. The most outstanding problems include funding constraints and logistical challenges, price policy uncertainty, accountability and remittance, and poor planning. Other issues are low user awareness and lack of staff training. This means that the major systemic and operational difficulties between feasible implementation of fee-based services in university libraries in Nigeria are financial, administrative inefficiency, and overall institutional weaknesses.

Subscribing to the fee-based services is viewed as the practical way to cope with financial limitations, which is in line with the RBV theory, which emphasizes leveraging internal strengths. However, issues such as user resistance, lack of policy, pricing difficulties, and ethical concerns about access remain significant challenges. These factors hinder full resource optimization as envisioned by the RBV. Overcoming implementation barriers through policy, training, and user engagement is crucial for translating these services into sustained competitive advantage. This finding concurs with the result of other authors, who also concluded that the efficient execution of fee-based services in Nigeria is disturbed by a number of problems (Olaseigbe et al., 2024; Odusanya et al., 2024; Okeke et al., 2015).

Findings from the hypothesis show that there is a positive, very strong, and significant relationship between the number of fee-based services provided and the quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries in this study. The positive correlation means that the provision of additional fee-based services is associated with a commendable improvement in the quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries. The RBV theory lends credence to the argument that strategic development and management of fee-based services contribute towards strengthening of the internal resource base in the library, which is positively associated with better service quality and efficiency. The outcome is also consistent with that of Suaidah & Arfa (2022), Okeke et al. (2015), and Igyuve & Ashaver (2014), who found out that the more fee-based services a university library provides, the better the quality of the services provided by that library.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results show that Nigerian university libraries offer a range of fee-based services; that fee-based services have a positive influence on the quality and the efficiency of the delivery of library service; that the number of fee-based services provided will influence the perceived quality of library service delivery in Nigerian university libraries to a very high extent; and that funding constraints, logistical challenges, price policy uncertainty, accountability and remittance, poor planning, low user awareness, and lack of staff training were some of the obstacles that impact the effective execution of fee-based services in Nigerian university libraries. The authors recommended that university libraries in Nigeria should diversify into providing specialized fee-based services, such as data analysis and lending of laptops, with investment in staff training and the provision of ICT infrastructure. Transparency and user confidence will increase as a result of clear policies and pricing structures.

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