

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
Faculty of Humanities

*Library Charges: An Investigation into the Feasibility of Introducing User Fees at the
Kabarnet District Library in Kenya*

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of:

MASTER OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

By

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September 2000

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DEDICATION

To my wife Pauline
and
our children Somolong, Hilary and Jepyegon,

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"No man is an island"

The completion of this study was due to co-operation and efforts from several people who spend their invaluable time providing information needed to facilitate the writing of the project. First, I owe a debt of gratitude to all my lecturers who guided me since joining the University of Cape Town in February 1999 to date. I am particularly grateful to Mrs J.G. Smith my supervisor who also doubles as my co-ordinator in Sociology of Information, who despite the limited time I was attached to her spent much time reading my scripts and giving me valuable suggestions and guidance from time to time, which enabled me to undertake the study and to complete it in time.

I am also very grateful to all the patrons and staff of the Kabarnet District Library who spent much of their time to answer questions and also provided useful information. I would be failing if I do not mention Emily Ngeno of the KNLS headquarters, Daniel Okiringi and Wesley Chepchieng of the Kabarnet District Library for all the efforts they undertook to ensure that the project is a success.

I wish also to thank the Directorate of Personnel Management and the University of Cape Town for the partial scholarships they offered me to pursue this study. My special thanks also go to the KNLS for the study leave they offered me to undertake this study. Last but not least my special regards goes to my brother Laban who has constantly given me encouragement through out my academic life. I will be failing if I do not mention the special role he played to facilitate my studies in the UK and in South Africa.

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LIST OF APPREVIATIONS

EALA:	East African Library Association
HQ:	Headquarters
ILL:	Inter library loan
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
LIS:	Library and information science
KNLS:	Kenya National Library Services
N/A:	Not applicable
NGO's:	Non-governmental organisations
SAPs	Structural adjustment programmes
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the feasibility of introducing user fees at the Kabarnet District Library a branch of the Kenya National Library Services (KNLS). The study consisted of two main approaches: the first was a conceptual review of the literature in the field and the second was an empirical study. The purpose of the literature review was to give an overview of the literature in the field. It was during the 1980s that the subject was thoroughly investigated and this review to a large extent focuses on that period. The review begins by discussing the topic from the point of view of the developed world, and then proceeds to the situation in Africa with special reference to Kenya.

The second approach involved an empirical study at the Kabarnet District Library, which was conducted between January and February 2000. The study was based on a survey study of 74 library patrons and 27 staff members. In addition interviews were conducted in 14 institutions served by the mobile library. Other stake holders were also interviewed, which included the co-ordinators of local NGO's, primary school teachers and the Kabarnet Town Clerk.

Questionnaires and interviews were the primary data collection tools. The questionnaires contained both open and closed ended questions. Both primary and secondary sources were used to collect the data required for the study, viz. directly from respondents and from government and KNLS publications. The survey reports the users' views regarding the library services, their opinions, willingness to pay user fees and the likely effects of user fees. The study also examined whether it is cost effective to introduce user fees taking into consideration the financial implications and staff time needed to implement the scheme. The study further examines the role of the mobile library services and specifically its funding implications, i.e. whether it is economical to run and the feasibility of introducing user fees to reduce the running costs.

The data collected was analysed using STATA software. The data was evaluated and conclusions drawn. The results show that the services offered by the Kabarnet District Library are inadequate, largely due to substantially inadequate funding and that there is an urgent need to inject more money to improve the service. However, it is apparent that although the users are willing to share costs, the introduction of user fees would not offer a solution since the amount likely to be generated will be minimal as the patrons are willing to

pay only an insignificant amount. The study has shown that user fees will negatively affect those who are in the most need of the service and who are also the least able to pay. These include students and the unemployed.

One of the main recommendations of the study is that alternative income generating activities be implemented to generate the much needed funds. Such initiatives would include establishing a bindery unit, a cafeteria, a video library and the letting of halls. A further recommendation is that a levy should be introduced on services which have direct financial implications on the library service operation e.g. the mobile library, ILL, and postal services. The study concludes with recommendations for further investigations which could encompass the whole KNLS network. Proposals are outlined which could be used as a basis for further research.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an outline of the framework of the study and the main aspects that underpin the study. A brief profile of Kenya and of the research area is also presented. This is done to facilitate the understanding of the prevailing socio-economic situation in Kenya, both in the national and local context. It is important to understand these factors since they can impact on the concept of user fees, which is the theme of this study.

No library can operate without adequate funds; the amount of money available, the sources of funding and the manner in which it is provided is of such importance that it should be of the highest concern to library management. In business organisations money is generated by the operations of the business. Unlike such organisations libraries are not regarded as revenue collecting agencies, rather, they are generally regarded as spending institutions and as such depend on other sources for their revenue. Libraries are thus not expected to make either a profit or a loss; they provide a service and are allocated funds from a parent or governing body to cover their running costs and other expenditures.

Finance impacts on all organisational activities, such as the employment of staff, technology to be applied, buildings to be erected, and equipment to be bought and adequate services to be provided. As stated above, libraries are not regarded as revenue-generating activities; rather they are regarded as spending institutions, which depend on parent bodies for funding. As a result, the wider financial world and external economic factors have a direct impact on libraries, for instance, when the parent organisation has to cut back on expenditure. This calls on libraries to re-evaluate themselves and determine whether they should continue to depend entirely on government funding, especially at critical moments.

Although the source of funding may vary for each type of library it is generally found that libraries in the public sector depend largely on some government agency for their funding. In Africa it has generally been found to be at such a minimal level that it has been difficult to sustain even the most basic services. A further impact on the funding of public sector libraries has been the world-wide recession. This has had severe repercussions in the developing world where governments have been forced by these and other economic reasons to severely cut back on public service spending. Libraries have generally been one of the most affected public services under these circumstances.

Faced with financial constraints there has been continued debate whether libraries should adopt an enterprise approach to the management of their services and whether they should seek alternative sources of income within and outside the library. Most libraries offer their services free or for a small fee. For a long time there has been debate as to whether libraries, particularly public libraries, should continue to offer free services or not and what would the implications be if libraries were to accrue some of their own income. Should public libraries generate a part of their income by means of a levy or fee for their services? Although this debate has been covered fully in the professional literature it has mostly reported the views of LIS professionals and also the views of professionals in the developed nations. Very few studies have been done to collect the views of the public in this regard, and even less on the situation in Africa.

All the factors outlined above as well as the researcher's involvement in public libraries in Kenya, provided the motivation and rationale to undertake this study.

1.2 Kenya Country Profile

The environmental setting for this study was Kenya, a country in East Africa, which lies on the equator with varied landscape and vegetation. It is bordered by Uganda to the West, to the North by Ethiopia and Sudan, to the North East by Somalia, to the East by the Indian Ocean and to the South by Tanzania. According to the 1999 census the population was 29 million people, derived from 42 communities. Kenya has an agricultural - based economy and about 80% of the population make their living from

agriculture with tea and coffee being the major source of foreign exchange. In addition, Kenya has a well-developed tourism industry and the country presents some of the best tourist destinations in the world. Although the economy is agrarian based the Kenyan industrial and commercial sector is more developed than those in other countries within the East African region. The per capita income is about \$340. The income distribution is, however, extremely inequitable, with the top 20% of the population receiving 60% of the national income, while the bottom 20% receives less than 3%. It is considered that with a population growth rate of about 3%, the population will double in less than 25 years, placing further pressure on the labour market, the provision of social services and on the amount of land per person (Kenya Government, 1999:3).

Kenya has a long history, including the British colonisation period from the late 1800s to 1963 when independence was attained. Kenya has a centralised system of government and it is divided into eight administrative regions. Starting in the late 1970s and continuing through the 1980s, the global recession caused economic output in Kenya to shrink on a per capita basis. The economy had recovered by the mid-80s, with an overall real growth rate of 5%. However, this growth has declined drastically since 1990 due to alleged corruption and mismanagement which resulted in the introduction of the structural adjustment programs by the IMF and the World Bank to curb the decline.

Kenya spends far more on social services than its immediate neighbours. For instance, Kenya spends about 35% of its national budget on education, which is much higher than almost all other comparable countries. In addition, Kenya is currently undertaking review studies to evaluate the proportion of income devoted to basic social services and the quantity and quality of services received by disadvantaged groups. In 1991 it was proposed that the following items should be included in a basic social services expenditure assessment:

- Basic education for all;
- Basic health care and nutrition for all;
- Reproductive health and family planning;
- Safer water and sanitation at low cost;
- The institutional capacity for delivery of these services (Kenya Government, 1991:35).

The Kenya Government further acknowledges the importance of information in the current national development plan (1997-2001), by stating that, "the objective of information resources and management is to provide an effective means of institutionalising systematic flow of and access to such information in the country" and that, "the development of information centres will be given priority during the plan period". However, there is no indication as to how this objective will be achieved. It is unfortunate to note that libraries are not prioritised in national development plans despite the important role that they can play (Kenya Government, 1999:60).

1.2.1 Profile of the Research Area (Baringo District)

The study relates to the Kabarnet District Library (cf.3.2), which is a branch of the Kenya National Library Services (KNLS). The branch is located in the Kabarnet Municipality in the Baringo District. The Baringo district is one of the seventeen districts in the Rift Valley Province. The district covers an area of 8,655 sq. km, and it is divided into eleven divisions, which are further, divided into 58 sub-locations. The Baringo District consists of the Kabarnet Municipality and the Baringo County Council.

According to the 1989¹ population census, the population of the Baringo District was 220,922 people. The population was projected to be 328,282 by 2000. The socio-economic implications of the increasing population include the increasing demand for basic services. This calls for expansion of educational, health, and other facilities to cope with larger numbers. The population of the district is mainly composed of young people under the age of 15, constituting 50% of the district's population. According to the 1989 census the district had a total workforce of 99,466 people. This was 45% of the total population and this comprised of 48,533 (22%) males and 50,933 (23%) females. The population is largely rural though there has been rural to urban migration in search of employment (Republic of Kenya, 1997:8).

Resource exploitation in the Baringo District includes agricultural and livestock production, exploitation of other natural resources and economic activities in commerce,

¹ The latest census data on Baringo District was not available in the 1999 statistics, but only in the 1989 data.

trade and services sectors. The informal sector plays a major part of developmental activities in the Baringo District. It supports the agricultural and transport sectors. By 1997 the district had total of 356 pre-schools, 318 primary schools, 29 secondary schools, 6 youth polytechnics, and one teacher training college. By 1997, there were 5,583 boys and 5,139 girls enrolled in pre-schools. There were 56,386 pupils enrolled in the primary schools of which 28,482 were boys and 29,904 were girls. Of the 7,864 students enrolled in secondary schools in the district, 4,640 were boys and 3,224 were girls. These figures show that there is a gender disparity in the education sector.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Kenya, like many other developing countries, is faced with the problem of scarcity of resources to fully finance its public services. Economic and financial constraints have forced the government not only to rely on conventional tax revenue to finance its services. Among the reform policies that have been introduced to generate additional financial resources is the implementation of the 'user fee policy' in such areas as health care and education in the public services sector.

It is considered that public library services in Kenya have been severely disadvantaged and under-financed because of a number of factors, viz:

- Poor national economy and scarcity of financial resources in Kenya,
- Library and information services are not a high priority on the national development agenda and,
- Lack of political will to promote library and information services. Kenya was the last of the three East African countries to establish a national library service because the government did not provide funding for recurrent expenditure. This trend has continued since the inception of the KNLS Board in 1967.

During a workshop on income generating activities in July 1998, the Director of KNLS informed participants that due to budgetary cuts by the government, the KNLS may have to consider offering its services on a cost-sharing basis and would venture into income generating activities. The Director stated that there was a 54% cut in the current year

(1998) budget and that similar cuts were to be expected in the future (Nganga, 1998). The researcher, however, is of the opinion that it is imperative to ensure that a user fee policy is not implemented without a thorough investigation into the situation. Careful consideration should thus be given to a variety of factors, such as:

- The ability of the poor, students, pensioners and other needy groups to pay,
- The level of revenue that can be generated, and the potential for this revenue to increase service provision should be established, and
- The cost of collecting and administering the revenue should also be determined.

The researcher is therefore convinced that an empirical study is an essential prerequisite to answer the above questions in order to avoid the problems which were encountered during the implementation of user fees in the health and education sectors in Kenya.

1.3.1 Aims, Objectives and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine whether public library services at the Kabarnet District Library in Kenya could be provided in partnership with the library community through cost sharing. The study will also attempt to establish whether alternative income generating sources, which have been identified and utilised in other parts of the world, would be feasible in Kenya. This study will also attempted to establish whether there is any role that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) could play in the provision of library services. In addition, the study will also investigate if it is economic to run the mobile library service and whether it is feasible to introduce user fees to cover some of its running costs.

As indicated earlier, cuts in government expenditure motivated the KNLS Board in 1998 to organise a workshop to address this problem. The stated objectives of the workshop were:

- To identify areas/service that KNLS could perform to generate income,
- To come up with strategies to be employed in performing the income generating, activities, and
- To prioritise the strategies and make recommendations for implementation.

After several deliberations, one of the recommendations, which proved difficult to adopt, was whether it was feasible for the KNLS to introduce charges for its services. This proposal evoked both emotive and ethical issues given that a study had not been undertaken to obtain the views of the staff members, library patrons, and other stakeholders with regard to these issues. The researcher's interest was drawn to this topic during that workshop and a decision was taken to pursue it when an opportunity to conduct research occurred. The researcher therefore expects the results of this study to help answer some of the questions raised in that workshop. A further outcome of this study could be to sensitise the KNLS of the need to undertake a wider study to enable the KNLS to generate policies on user-fees. Such a study could further serve as a recommendation to the Kenya Government for adoption in the future if there is a need to introduce user fees.

One of the important library services that has been most affected by the cuts in library spending is the mobile library service. This service reaches out to patrons in outlying areas who have no access to information services. The researcher was thus motivated to pay specific attention in this study to the mobile services' funding and its current and future role in society in Kenya.

1.3.2 Research Questions

The study will attempt to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is the Kenyan Government's policy on user fees in the public library sector?
- 2) Is KNLS receiving a fair share of government funding?
- 3) What are the users' views of the quality of current library services and staff competence?
- 4) Are library users willing and able to pay for library services?
- 5) Which services can be offered for a fee?
- 6) Who will pay and who will be exempted if fees are to be introduced?
- 7) What is the magnitude of revenue that might be collected, and will it be sufficient to improve service provision?

- 8) What will the impact of fees be on membership and utilisation of the library?
- 9) Apart from user fees what other alternative sources of revenue could be introduced?
- 10) What supplementary role can individuals, local NGOs, and other aid agencies play in the provision of library services?
- 11) What is the future role of the mobile library services and specifically the funding implications?
- 12) What are the views of the library staff and institutions served by the mobile library regarding its effectiveness?

1.3.3 Limitations of the Study

The following were identified as the limitations of the study:

- Non-users of the service were not targeted as data was collected only from patrons using the library services at the time of the study.
- The study was conducted in one branch and is thus not necessarily representative of the KNLS network.
- Access to all the required government documents and KNLS financial records was not possible since those handling this information were reluctant to divulge it. It is likely that they may have viewed the study to be sensitive, although the researcher had clearly stated the objective of the study and had sought permission from all relevant bodies to counter this problem.
- Data was collected from the Baringo District, which is not economically well endowed. The study therefore did not take into account the socio-economic diversity that exists in the country. Thus, findings could be limited.
- The study involved people of different educational backgrounds and some respondents may have lacked the conceptual knowledge to respond adequately to the topic. This may have affected the quality of data.
- The study largely collected opinions and it is likely that not all respondents understood the purpose of the study; some biased responses may therefore have been obtained.
- The study did not investigate policy and ethical issues since they were considered to be beyond its scope.

1.4 Research Schedule and Execution of the Study

The study was intended to focus on the Baringo District only and data was collected by means of an empirical study conducted at the Kabarnet District Library in Kenya. During the study the views of library patrons were solicited to determine their ability and willingness to pay for library services if user fees were to be introduced. The views of the staff members and other stake-holders were also collected. The study was conducted between January and February 2000. Permission to conduct research was granted by the Director of the Kenya National Library Services in Nairobi in November 1999. A letter had been obtained from the University of Cape Town which helped to identify the researcher and to secure co-operation from all those concerned. This letter was used to seek permission from KNLS and other relevant authorities to conduct research in Kenya.

1.5 Outline of the Dissertation

In order to provide focus for the dissertation, critical issues such as the a brief overview of the environmental setting of the study, statement of the problem, the significance of the study and the aim and objectives are defined in chapter one. It was also found useful to highlight the limitations of the study here. Chapter two deals with the literature review. Here, international literature on the user fee debate on public libraries is evaluated taking into consideration the views of both the proponents and opponents of user fees. The social, ethical and political issues with regard to the fee debate are highlighted. Chapter three presents the research approach that was followed for this study. A survey study was utilised and the main data collection tools used were: questionnaires, interviews and documentary sources. In chapter four the responses obtained from the questionnaires and interviews are reported. Chapter five provides a discussion and synthesis of the survey results and information obtained from the literature review. The acceptability of a user fee policy, perceived quality of service, exemptions and waivers are specifically addressed. The final chapter (ch. 6) contains the main conclusions and recommendations, and further highlights future challenges and areas for investigation.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND USER FEES

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the topic of user fees from the public library point of view. The subject of charging for library services has been a contentious issue for a long time and has evoked many debates. However, it was during the 1980s that it was thoroughly investigated and this review to a large extent focuses on that period. The researcher begins by discussing the topic from the point of view of the developed world, and then finally investigates the situation in Africa with special reference to Kenya. The chapter is organised into five sections. The first section reviews background matters such as the role of public libraries, and the historical perspective of user fees. The second part reviews ethical issues regarding the debate on free and equal access to information. The third part looks at the current state of public libraries in Africa, what contributed to their decline, and the quest to identify sustainable solutions. The fourth part provides an overview of the public library services in Kenya and an analysis of user fee policies currently in place in the health and education sector in Kenya. The chapter ends with a summary of the relevant points of the study.

2.2 The Role and Purpose of the Public Library

Before addressing the issue of whether or not public libraries should introduce fees for services, it is necessary to consider their role in society. Public libraries are a world-wide phenomenon. They occur in a variety of societies in different cultures and different stages of development. Although the varied context in which they operate inevitably result in differences in the services they provide and the way those services are delivered, they normally have a number of characteristics in common. According to Cartmil (1992:25) one of the major reasons for the creation of the public library is that individuals need free and equal access to information.

Cronin (1985:431) states that a public library is established and supported by the community, either through local, regional or national government or through some other form of community organisation e.g., library trust or non-governmental organisation. It provides access to knowledge, information and works of imagination through a range of sources and services. Public libraries differ from special, school and academic libraries in that they do not exist to serve the needs of a homogenous, clearly defined clientele. Their potential user community is the population as a whole. According to the UNESCO Manifesto (1994), the primary purpose of public libraries is to provide resources and services in a variety of media to meet the needs of individuals and groups for:

- **Education:** supporting both individual and self-conducted education as well as formal education at all levels.
- **Information:** the public library is the local centre of information, making all kinds of knowledge readily available to its users.
- **Personal development:** providing opportunities for personal creative development.

UNESCO considers that freedom, prosperity, and the development of society and of individuals are fundamental human values, and this will only be attained through the ability of well-informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights to play an active role in society. UNESCO also believes that constructive participation and the development of democracy depend on satisfactory education as well as on free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information and that the public library plays an important role to achieve these objectives. The services of the public library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. Specific services and materials are also provided for those users who cannot use the regular services and materials, for example linguistic minorities, people with disabilities or people in hospital or prison.

2.2.1 Legal and Financial Framework

The UNESCO Public library Manifesto (1994) states, “The public library shall in principle be free”. According to the Manifesto charging users should not be used as a source of revenue for public libraries as it makes the ability to pay a criterion in

determining who can use the public library, reduces access and therefore breaches the fundamental principle that libraries should be available to all. This issue will be discussed exhaustively in the second part of this chapter.

The UNESCO Manifesto identifies the authorities who should be responsible for public libraries with regard to legislation and funding arrangements. However, the funding of libraries throughout the world is more complex than stated by the manifesto. Depending on the country either the provinces, regions or states, or a combination of authorities are responsible for funding library services. There are also a number of sources of funding used to finance public libraries but the proportions of funding from each source will vary in each country.

The primary sources are:

- Revenue derived from taxation at local, regional or central government level
- Block grants from central, regional or local government level

The secondary sources of income may include:

- Donations from funding bodies or individuals
- Revenue from user fees, which may also include fines, reservations, etc.
- Revenue from commercial activities, e.g., publishing
- Sponsorship from external organisations

In order to ensure sustained development and a place in the information network it is considered that the public library should be closely related to and funded by the appropriate level of government and this should be the eventual aim where such a relationship does not already exist.

2.3 User Fees: Background information

The modern public library provides access to a variety of media resources, which incorporate printed, audio-visual and electronic resources. It organises and makes them available for convenient and easy use. Provision of services implies that there should be adequate funds, which will ensure the supply of sufficient and adequate resources to

make a library a dependable source of information. A library service to the community thus requires sufficient funding for the satisfactory maintenance of its services.

As a result of the advances in technologies, library automation and their related costs, combined with shrinking budget allocations, there has been a redefinition of the price structure of information access. According to Weinland and McClure (1987:53) it is imperative that distinctions be made between the production of information and access to information. Libraries have traditionally been responsible for information access and dissemination, but have failed to recognise the intrinsic costs in providing that service. This disparity combined with a trend for libraries to produce information, have provided library management with the impetus for developing a corresponding redefinition of the library's role and parameters of service. Some of the proponents of user fees, as will be discussed later, believe that it is no longer sufficient to justify the existence of libraries on the basis that they provide for society's information needs or that they are guardians of culture.

'To charge or not to charge and if to charge whom to charge, for what and how much'? Is that the equivalent for libraries to Hamlet's "to be or not to be". According to Abelsnes (1995) some say it is some say it's not. The issue of user fees in public libraries has been debated extensively in the library community for several years. The question of whether or not to charge fees for library services is a difficult issue for many public librarians and it is not clear whether the general public shares the aversion to user fees as expressed by most librarians (Kinnucan, 1998:183). It remains a world-wide phenomena that despite a continued array of arguments both for and against charging, together with a long tradition of free services, public libraries continue to be poorly funded.

Funding is required not only when a public library is established, but also to sustain the library on an assured and regular basis. Without suitable levels of funding over the long-term it is impossible for libraries to develop policies for service provision and make the most effective use of available resources. According to Cartmil (1992:25), more and more, libraries have had to look elsewhere to cope with the funding of the variety of

services being demanded, and the explosive growth of information technology which has impinged on the traditional stability of the library. As the new technologies are introduced they change the way the library receives and disseminates information.

2.3.1 The Historical Perspective of User Fees

Historically, the role of the public library has been to provide free and equal access to information to all. According to Harmse, (1989:3) subscription libraries were done away with during the first half of the 20th century and converted into free public libraries accessible to all. In most countries either the local or central government primarily finances libraries. Smith (1989:35) states that the government subsidies are based upon the notion of free and equal access to information, so that all citizens may equally participate in a democratic society.

According to Webb (1994:1) the notion of making a charge to users of library and information services (LIS) is not new. As far back as the 1950s and 1960s there was debate about the subject in the professional literature. However, in those early years the focus was largely on charging fines for overdue books, charging a minimal sum to cover postage for book reservations and making a charge for use to non-resident users in the case of public libraries. University libraries also considered similar aspects of their services for such charges, with non-affiliated persons rather than resident users being subject to charges for use.

By the 1980s small scale cost recovery was not the sole reason for making a charge in the library environment. Information was being promoted as a valuable commodity, which was essential to decision-making and part of competitor intelligence gathering. As such information was viewed as something on which a price could be put with the potential of making a profit. It was considered that charges could be made to both internal and external clients of the organisation, in the latter case presenting an additional range of service, which could be offered. Although charging still remains a controversial issue in some quarters, the attitude within the LIS profession is changing. According to

Webb (1994:2), to introduce charges for certain specialist services are no longer regarded by most LIS professionals as unethical or unacceptable.

2.3.2 Factors that influenced the User Fee Concept

From the above exposition one can point to several factors, which influenced LIS professionals to consider charging as an additional option to raise funding for libraries. These factors include: (1) changing economic climate, which resulted in changes in central and local government funding, (2) emerging technologies, which changed the way information is received and disseminated and (3) increasing competition from other information providers who entered the information scene as result of the new technologies.

2.3.2.1 Changing Economic Climate

In recent years it has become increasingly difficult for libraries to fund their services. As indicated above, one of the major factors, which influenced LIS professionals across the public and private sectors to consider charging as an option, has been the changing economic climate that resulted in changes in central and local government funding. Due to these changes and the implication on the wider world, terms such as budget cuts and value for money policies, which were used extensively in the private business world, became a reality to most librarians. According to Cartmil (1992:26), there has been a steady increase in demand for books and services, as well as for a wider range of additional services, such as audio-visual services and fax, all of which may be subsidised at the expense of the free basic service. In parallel with this increasing demand on services, public funding was badly affected by the economic recession of the 1970s. In Britain for example, public libraries' budgets were either reduced or retained at the same level, which together with inflation meant a drop in funding. These are the problems the public libraries in the developing world are currently facing.

The proponents of user fees suggest that the prevailing economic climate in the world requires that the public sector must link the quest for resources and development funds with the realities of available resources. They believe that the non-profit making

organisation which has to go back each year to a funding body to request for funds should be among the first to look for alternative sources of funds. Many argue that when the economy flourishes, money for public services such as libraries is readily available, but when the times are difficult it is the first to go. Unfortunately, a large number of taxpayers consider that information, learning, and library services are a luxury that should not be supported during hard times. Traditionally, both the public and the academic library, have not been regarded priority funding areas in most countries during hard times.

2.3.2.2 Emerging Technologies

Fees for public library services resurfaced after many years largely as a result of the emergence of new technologies. A change of approach became apparent from 1970 onwards when technology became an important factor, particularly in making online services available. The rapid development of these services alerted LIS managers, not only to the potential for improving services and providing access to a far wider range of source material, but also to the very real possibility of a rapid escalation of costs. Since the introduction of online databases, there has been a debate in the library community as to whether online searching should be a free service or whether fees should be charged. According to Smith (1989:33), initially, online searching was seen as a new, add-on service for which new sources of funds could be sought. The new technology and the need to secure funding have driven librarians to make a choice between fee and free service. In the face of funding cuts and escalating expenses, particularly telecommunications, the cost of providing online services impose a serious burden on an already strained library budget. To solve this, some librarians proposed special fees to defray some of the costs incurred.

It was believed that by combining the technology with retrospective research collections, as well as expertise of information specialists, most major academic and public libraries will have the capacity to serve information needs of the business community in a timely and efficient manner (Popovich, 1983:1). Most public libraries now charge nominal fees to surf the Internet as well as for email services. It is suggested that fees could serve to

regulate the level of demand for online services. It is also argued that demand will probably never be met without user fees, because public libraries will not be able to afford the electronic services without them. The end result will be that users able to pay will find another source, and those not able to pay will have no access at all (Jaeger, 1999:54).

The major barrier to the widespread acceptance and provision of online services in public libraries has been cost. The costs can be split into two groups: set-up (including equipment and training), and operations. The latter can further be separated into direct and indirect expenses (e.g. staff overheads). A library's options include full cost recovery, or no cost recovery (free service) or a combination, i.e. partial cost recovery. Many of the libraries that charge user fees limit the charges to those directly associated with the search such as connect time, print, and telecommunication expenses. Others also attempt to recover staff time and overhead costs (Smith, 1989:34).

2.3.2.3 Increasing Competition

As a result of the new technologies the information market has increasingly become international. This is especially true about the electronic information market. The lines drawn between libraries and the information marketplace are now more blurred. The library without a wall is meeting a market with walls. In the electronic world some argue that libraries have no place unless they join the market. The most effective way of distributing information is now directly from the author to the user. Some believe that intermediaries like publishers or libraries might be obsolete in a matter of time. Libraries are also viewed as a temporary means of distributing information. (Abelsnes, 1995).

Coffman (1995:171) says there is evidence which shows that the traditional library is a beleaguered institution. It is threatened by a decline in funding, it is unable to keep up with the output of published literature, and it is being challenged by an ever increasing number of online services and other information distribution systems which promise to do everything that that library does. Coffman believes that no institution could undergo such radical changes in its environment and remain unscathed, and there is no doubt that,

if the library is to survive at all, it will emerge a rather different institution than the one we know at present. Penniman (1992:41) states that, "to remain as we are - that is, to remain vital - we must change. If we do not change, we won't remain vital".

Coffman (1995:170) expounds further that while libraries have been struggling to stay afloat, enterprising companies have begun to discover the commercial potential of what libraries do, and are selling much of the same information the public have declined to pay for through taxes. Many of the commercial online services that were originally developed to help facilitate research in libraries have begun to look and act as libraries with time. This is especially true as cost of computer storage has declined and, and full text started to take the place of bare bones bibliographic databases. However, Lau (1993:156) reminds that there is an ethical question for libraries having to charge for services simply because they are in a different format.

2.4 Information Value

Central to the fee debate is also the concept of information either as a public good or an economic commodity and the public versus private nature of library services. Lau (1993:152) states that information displays some of the features of both an economic commodity and a public good. According to Jaeger (1999:56), the discussion of the public library involves a consideration of public goods, private goods, and merit goods and finding the proper place of the library within this continuum in order to determine its function in terms of fees and other matters of policy remains a major issue.

Kinnucan et al (1999:185) state that from an economic point of view, public goods and private goods can be differentiated along several dimensions. The two that are most commonly identified are "excludability" and "rivalness". A good is excludable to the extent that "free riding" can be prevented; that is, it is excludable to the extent that non-purchasers of the good are prevented from benefiting from it. A good exhibits rivalness to the extent that consumption by one person precludes consumption by another. Private goods are excludable and rival; public goods are not.

According to Lau (1993:153), information is perhaps best described as a public good, in that it works for the good of the community. The external or spill over benefits to society outweighs its benefit to the individual. However, most observers believe that, like public schools, public libraries provide a mix of social and private benefits. One could expect, therefore, that the funding of public libraries would reflect a similar mix of public and private sources of revenue. Accordingly, society values an informed citizenry and people approve of and agree to a free public library service though in most instances only a minority of the population uses it.

As indicated earlier, library services have been described as a general good with external benefits. Services that serve an external public good often fall to the bottom of the local funding priority list. There seems to be an unspoken hope that somebody else will support what everyone agrees is a wonderful service. Many traditional arguments used to defend public financing for libraries are based on externalities. According to Skrzewski (1985:138), the difficulty with such an argument is that they are based on benefits which are not measurable. For instance, the value of libraries in a democracy is not something on which a tangible worth can easily be placed. In a world in which public services have to compete for a limited supply of money, the fact that libraries exhibit externalities is sufficient to assure neither total nor adequate funding.

It is considered by many that information *per se* is not free. Even if it is disseminated free of charge some costs are incurred in printing and distributing it, making it available to users, for instance in indexing and abstracting it. According to Martyn (in Norton, 1988:14), there is in effect a 'value added' concept involved in processing and distributing the commodity. Weinland (1987:53) defines information as a good with an associated value. It is considered by many that information has a value. However, this value can also be viewed from different standpoints. For instance, economists see information as a commodity, which is allocated to the individual through the market. On the other hand, the library community's view of library service and the cost thereof is different from the economist's view. Many librarians consider access to information as a right, not a privilege for which a fee is charged.

2.4.1 Economic Considerations

Along with the discussion on financial constraint and technological pressures many other persuasive arguments have been put forward to illustrate why it is necessary to charge user fees. According to Jaeger (1999:53) it is considered that fees encourage efficiency, in that patrons pay in proportion to their level of use. Likewise, fees serve to avoid waste and over-consumption. Also, it is argued that fees assist libraries in their efforts to maintain fiscal soundness and to serve the public in a financially efficient manner.

Cartmil (1992:29) states that there are two main economic arguments which have been raised against the introduction of user charging. The first claims that unrestricted access to books and other materials has cultural, economic and social benefits to both the individual and the society which are much greater than the cost of provision. Many suggest that charging for services would seriously undermine the library's role in this area of society. The second economic argument relates to the "non-depletability" characteristic of library materials. It is considered that the materials contained in a library may be perused many times without any significant reduction in their value to the user.

2.5 Ethical, Social and Political Considerations

As indicated in the introduction of this study, the issue of fees in libraries has stirred a great deal of controversy and it has generated some compelling as well as some unconvincing arguments. An examination of the debate raises, in addition to the economic issues, a number of political, ethical and social considerations regarding the provision of services and how they should be financed. Though there are strong economic reasons to substantiate the pro-fee arguments, they very often do not consider the political and ethical basis on which libraries are established.

Norton (1988:3) states that charging for library services became an emotive issue largely because of the conflict in approach between "the tradition of the "free" public library and unfettered access to information and the concept of information as a tradable commodity". Some of the arguments, which have been put forward on the issue of charging as indicated earlier, include the likely economic benefits to the public library service and the effect which charging would have on this service.

According to Cartmil (1992:28), the following are some of the more common arguments put forward by the free market proponents:

- Fees encourage efficient use of public resources.
- Fees limit waste and over-consumption.
- Fees promote service levels based on need and demand.
- Fees control growth of and lower demand for service.
- Fees encourage management innovation and consequent improvements.

Cartmil adds that the main points against charging are that the introduction of user fees would:

- Narrow the concept of the library by imposing financial restraints and hamper its position as a focal point of educational, recreational and cultural life;
- Discourage intellectual curiosity and penalise the purposive reader;
- Result in excessive dependence on income from charges, placing undue emphasis on purchase of high turnover stock;
- Seriously undermine complex network of inter-library co-operation which makes such effective use of the nation's library resources of all kinds.

The most important ethical consideration in the fee debate is that fees place a barrier between people and their right to information. While contributing to the debate, Wilson (1987:5) raised the question of whether "free access" means 'free of charge' and recognises that although the individual's right is to be protected, there is nonetheless a 'high obvious cost' as new services evolve and advance, and perhaps replace the value of the old. It is considered by many that the right of free access is a just and noble cause and viable in a climate where one can negotiate for justifiable extra resources, defend them, and demonstrate their value to the public. Wilson (1985:5) adds that, if you are working on a dwindling budget and the choice is between free access to an increasingly mediocre and unsatisfactory service, or unrestricted access by payment to the whole spectrum of information and cultural resources demanded by modern citizens, then one should begin to qualify the term 'free'.

Proponents of fee-based services argue that fees provide libraries with much needed funds to supplement diminishing resources, that charging fees can actually widen access to information by allowing the introduction of new services that could not otherwise be financed. It is argued that without making charges, libraries will not be able to keep abreast of advances because of lack of financing. In such a situation they believe that a failure to charge may lead to curtailment of freedom of access to information for users, which is self-defeating.

As stated above, there are those who feel that libraries (at least public libraries) should be entirely publicly funded, and that any attempt to develop other sources of revenue will jeopardise the funding libraries already have. There is also suspicion that the success of income generating-activities will motivate the government to move the goal-posts further back and expect even higher proportions of operating costs to be covered by entrepreneurial activity. This is a factor, used by opponents of the move towards an enterprise culture to justify their stance. According to Davidson (1989:30) the above hypothecation gives the government the whip hand, because they can simply reduce the grant-in-aid without the institutions having any say in the matter.

But Coffman (1995:181) says that some arguments are short sighted. In the first place, if we really took them at face value, we should stop all efforts to develop sources of outside funding of any type including endowments, contributions, grants and anything else that didn't come directly from taxpayers. Second and most importantly, many public institutions that offer services similar to libraries such as museums, performing arts centres, parks, monuments and other cultural and recreational facilities are partially funded by revenue they generate while they charge fees for their services.

Information has also been equated with power and is argued that, if one must pay for that 'information/power', then only those able to pay will be informed. As a result an information elite could be formed, and those who are socially and economically under-privileged will be denied information access (Harmse, 1989:3). It is argued that borrowers who will be discouraged from using the services will be the most

disadvantaged and they will tend to be those with the greatest need for information, e.g. the young and the unemployed.

2.6 Targeting Specific Products and Clients

According to Skreszowski (1985:137), although most librarians would charge for such services as photocopying and computer searches, many argue that fees should not be charged for traditional library services because such fees would discriminate against the poorer elements in the society. Webb (1994:3) advises that it is not a good idea to introduce charges randomly for existing and unchanged services that have previously been free at the point of delivery. No one will be keen to pay for something, which they might be able to get elsewhere without being charged.

According to Behrman (1994:76), however, many argue that there are "added value" services, which a library could offer for a fee. Cronin and Martyn (1984:377) state that there is some increasingly popular notion of information as a sellable commodity, which may lead to the development of high cost service and products for specialist markets, willing and able to pay the going rate. One of the suggestions advanced by proponents of user fees is that, a library may identify some value-added services that are aimed at those who are better able to pay.

However, it is argued that establishing a pricing policy for a library service is difficult because all information is not of equal value. Who for instance, is to determine the value of information? As indicated earlier, information is considered as a "general good," a freely available product or service of which its use is voluntary and there is no market price against which to appraise it. There are others also who argue that there is no justification for funding public libraries with tax money if not for the fact that public libraries are the only institutions that support free access to information.

Unlike many other players in the information stage, libraries are undercapitalised and lack a tradition of developing value-added products or services of their own for sale in the open market. As a consequence they may be unable to compete on an equal footing with other information providers would be vulnerable to changes in the mood of the market place. The net effect of this trend may be that the user will receive a poorer service. But Bawa et al (1998:32) argue that if the public is to pay for library services, then they will be entitled to demand for the services and resources they require. According to Webber (1990:227), it is accepted that libraries have a captive client base but not one, which is generally willing to pay for services in the library, or regard the library as a "business" organisation. On the other hand, business people are sceptical about a library's ability to meet their deadlines and have low expectations of a library's ability to meet their needs. In addition, students, academic researchers, pensioners and other important public library clients may not have the money to pay for services.

Whereas a private company can choose to diversify its services, or concentrate on a very specific market, a public library will wish to offer services to a wide range of users and not just the ones with money. According to Webber (1990:226), serving the community is an objective that no library would put aside; thus limiting the profitability of the library service if user fees were to be introduced. From an economic viewpoint the public library represents a decreasingly significant segment of the overall information market, and as such will be less able to fulfil its traditional role as the universal information provider.

It might not be unreasonable for a library to charge for some of its services, and quite a number of users may be more than happy to pay for some value-added services. But there is a danger here of the so-called 'domino effect'. Once you start charging for this, you might as well charge for that. It can be extremely difficult to draw the line between charged services and non-charged services, librarians will be under constant pressure to charge more in order to increase revenue and/or reduce the use of expensive services (Abelsnes, 1995). It is likely from the above argument that publicly-funded services, of lesser quality but much lower in price, may be squeezed out of existence by the high cost, high quality product beyond the financial reach of the public.

2.7 The African Perspective

In order to understand the framework and the financial position of the public library within the African continent it is necessary to give an exposition of the objectives of these organisations, their sources of income, and the pressures brought to bear on their budgets by economic factors during recent years. The early promise of libraries has not generally been fulfilled in Africa. Buildings and other facilities have not been maintained and shelves are either empty or full of out-of-date and irrelevant material, funding is insufficient and the percentage of the population using services is negligible. This is true, albeit at different levels, of all libraries in the public sector, whether academic, public or special (Rosenberg, 1999:13).

The situation in other types of library is similar or worse. The practice of spending a certain percentage of the total budget on the library is no longer followed. In public, special and school libraries the book budget is usually non-existent or on paper only, meaning that the money budgeted for purchasing new materials is never released. In the public libraries of Africa it is sometimes only the buildings and librarian's salary that remains. Often a large part of the library budget is spent on staff costs. Books and other materials are no longer purchased. New branches have not been built to serve the expanding populations. The chief and most obvious immediate cause for this decline is that governments are no longer able to adequately finance libraries. (Rosenberg, 1999:14).

Public libraries operate within a political framework and are vulnerable to the political process in a country. Government decisions affect libraries' funding levels and service priorities. In Africa the library and information sector have received the least financial support from the government in comparison to other continents. At the early stage of independence, libraries were highly regarded and obtained similar commitments as other essential services such as hospitals and schools. This was partly because of the thirst for education which gripped Africa at independence and the hope that libraries would contribute significantly towards achieving this cherished goal (Mchombu: 1991:30). However, due to the problems which have faced the African continent as a result of

corruption/mismanagement, war, diseases and famine, libraries have not been accorded due consideration as stated earlier on.

The crucial questions which face all African public libraries are: how to justify to governments a more equitable share of the national budget in addition to the various demands such as defence, health and education budgets? How can the cost-benefit relationship between library services and development be established? (Raseroka, 1994:54). Libraries still need to prove that they could be notable development agencies. A lack of such proof adversely affects government's opinion of libraries and its funding. It is a very difficult task to convince the general public and government that libraries are of benefit. The benefit to the illiterate is not always evident. Yet in Africa today, literacy is a "must", not least for development of technology, but also for the development of a knowledge democracy (Harvard-Williams, 1994:15).

The problems which have caused the ineffectiveness of libraries as a catalyst in socio-economic development, can be understood by looking at the historical development of libraries in some African countries (Chijioko, 1989:174). As stated earlier, libraries in many African countries after independence were well supported by their governments, but they have not been able to live up to what was expected of them. Serious thinking about the future of libraries needs to be done, and concrete strategic plans need to be formulated today, so that the profession can provide adequate and appropriate services tomorrow (Harvard-Williams, 1994:17).

2.7.1 The Search for Sustainability

The slowing down of African economies and the attendant hardships related to the lack of access to basic necessities such as food and good health have reduced the finances that are available for library services and any other social services. Income is being redistributed and while governments accept direct responsibility for such social services as health, education and defence, libraries are relegated to the bottom of the priority list. Unlike education, the provision of library and information services is not considered to be

a basic social function to be fulfilled by the government, despite the supportive functions these services fulfil (Zaaiman, 1987:13).

In Africa, libraries have a classic life cycle. They are usually launched with fanfare and publicity, which is followed by slow decline and eventual closure. Long term sustainability of these new initiatives can only be provided by a stable ongoing administrative structure that will support the library service and make provisions for its future activities (Rosenberg, 1993:34). Mchombu (1991:29) advises that we must face the fact that unless the actual problems facing African librarianship are mapped out accurately, there is real danger that whatever prescription is suggested, it will only cure the symptoms rather than the disease.

According to Rosenberg (1999:15), there is nothing new about addressing the sustainability of library development in Africa. It is a problem that has been well recognised for over 25 years, and both African librarians and donor agencies have addressed it. But none of these initiatives have succeeded in revitalising libraries and, because most have been donor-led, they have only served to increase dependency on outside funding. As public funding has dwindled, libraries in Africa have begun to embrace the strategy of costing services and charging at the point of use, a strategy in line with the market philosophy promoted world wide in the 1980s. Public libraries, for example in Tanzania, are charging subscriptions or entrance fees while in other countries university libraries expect student fees to include a library element and are charging for photocopying, inter-library loan, e-mail, etc. Income is generated from binding, hiring out facilities, and operating bookshops and restaurants (Rosenberg, 1999:18).

According to Rosenberg (1999:18), evidence suggests that user fees can never bring sustainability. For one thing fees cannot be levied at a sufficiently high rate. For example at private universities, where a library levy has always been added to student fees and been part of the funding structure, they do not even cover the cost of all new acquisitions. This is true even if the fees charged are high in relation to the levels of income in the

country. For example, the University of East Africa in Kenya charges the equivalent of US\$40 per year, but this only meets the cost of journal subscriptions.

2.8 An Overview of Public Library Services in Kenya

The provision of library services in Kenya resembles that in many third world countries: the information services reach no more than 10% of the population. Most of the people who receive the service live in towns, and not all town dwellers are even reached. Again, most of those who access the service have to be proficient in the English language, which is not understood by a substantial number of the country's population, especially in the rural areas. Though there has been quantitative growth, with more libraries, more books, and more librarians being available, the post-independence library service in Kenya has not changed qualitatively from the colonial one.

Prior to independence rural library services existed to some extent, and within their limits were remarkably successful. The Kenya Carnegie circulating libraries were set up to bring books to the white settlers who were scattered over a wide sweep of the country. At the end of 1932 thirty-three libraries had been opened in a variety of locations, which included hotels, clubs, bomas, shops and garages. A library service for Africans was operated through the provision of book boxes and the introduction of a postal lending service. About forty centres were set up, mostly in social halls or premises rented by Municipalities or District Councils (Rosenberg, 1993:31).

At the East African conference held in 1944, Elspeth Huxley was commissioned to tour East Africa and to recommend what the Governments should do to improve the provision of books and magazines to the East African public. Upon completion of her work she wrote a report which was published in 1946. Among her recommendations was a proposal that a lending library service should be established. This led to the founding of the East African Literature Bureau which recommended the creation of a library service. Subsequent to this, C. Annesly was appointed as the chief librarian who recommended

the establishment of fully fledged public library services in the three East African countries.

A major step was taken in 1958 when the East African Library Association (EALA) held its first conference at Muguga, Kenya, where it was unanimously approved that statutory library boards should be set up in East Africa. The East African governments accepted the request by the EALA and announced their willingness to make grants available for the development of library services. In 1960 the British Council appointed Sydney Hockey to produce a report on the state of the libraries in East Africa. The report was published in 1960 and among the recommendations was the establishment of Library Boards in each of the three East African countries. Kenya was the last of the three countries to establish a library services board because the government did not provide funds for recurrent expenditures. It was only in 1965 when the Kenya National Library Services Board was created.

2.8.1 Kenya National Library Services (KNLS)

The Kenya National Library Services (KNLS) is a statutory body of the Kenya Government, which is empowered by law to provide public library services in the country. The Kenya National Library Services (KNLS) was established by an act of parliament in August 1965, but the first Board of Directors only commenced its functions on April, 1st, 1967. The initial stock of about 40,000 volumes which was inherited from the former East African Literature Bureau in 1967 had by 1999 grown to a total library collection of 630,000 volumes. This figure is inclusive of books available both at the headquarters and branch libraries. The size of the staff has also continued to grow. As at the end of 1999, the KNLS had a total of 733 staff, of which 58 were professional librarians and 131 paraprofessional staff. The rest comprised of support staff i.e., accounts, secretarial and clerical staff. The number of registered library users in the entire system, including mobile library users, was 154,799 in 1999. These figures were comprised of 75,642 adults and 57,517 children (KNLS Board, 1999:9).

2.8.2 Strategies of the KNLS

The KNLS Board had originally pledged to establish branch libraries in all the provinces and in each of the 42 districts by 1980. Unfortunately this was not achieved and there is no hope that this will be achieved in the near future. To add to this problem, the administrative districts have been increased to over 60. By 1999 only 22 libraries had been established. This comprised of 8 Provincial Libraries, 6 District Libraries and 6 Community Libraries. The first of the Provincial Libraries was opened in Kisumu in 1969 with funds provided by the British Council. This was followed by Embu library in 1970. The Nyeri Branch was opened in 1965 through funding from Norad. The Kakamega branch opened in 1972 and the Eldoret Branch opened in 1976, also by means of funding from Norad. The second phase of KNLS development began with the construction of District Libraries in the 1980s. These included the Kabarnet District Library, which was opened in 1988. The most recent development includes the establishment of community libraries, services by means of book-boxes and the camel library.

In addition to services mentioned above, the KNLS also operates mobile library services in 8 of its branches-viz. Nairobi, Eldoret, Embu, Kisumu, Mombasa, Nyeri, Kakamega and Kabarnet. However, due to lack of funding for maintenance and purchase of new books, only 4 of the mobile libraries are currently operational.

2.8.3 Objectives and Functions of the KNLS Board

The main functions of the Board according to the KNLS Act (1984, Cap 225) are:

- (a) to promote, establish, equip, manage, maintain and develop libraries in Kenya as a National Library Service;
- (b) to plan and co-ordinate library, documentation and related services in Kenya;
- (c) to advise the Government, local authorities and other public bodies on all matters relating to library documentation and related services;
- (d) to provide facilities for the study of, and for training in the principles, procedures and techniques of librarianship and other related subjects as the Board may from time to time decide;

- (e) to advise the Government on library education and training needs for library, documentation and related services;
- (f) to publish the national bibliography of Kenya and to provide bibliographic and reference services.

2.8.4 KNLS Funding

The KNLS receives its funding from the central government. According to the KNLS Act (1984, Cap 225) the funds and resources shall consist of:

- (a) such sums as may, from time to time, be provided by Parliament for the purposes of the this Act;
- (b) any sums or property which may in any manner become payable or invested in the board in respect of any matter incidental to the carrying out of this functions; and
- (c) any sums or property which may be donated to the board: provided that the Board shall not be obliged to accept a donation for a particular purpose unless it approves of the terms and conditions attached to such donation.

Though the government has clearly stipulated the sources of funds, the KNLS, has however, had to contend with inadequate finances, which for a long time resulted in staff shortages, and inadequate book-stock. Because of financial constraints, some aspects of development had to take place in alternate years. That is, KNLS recruits staff, purchases books, and trains staffs in separate years. For a long time the Board has been given a grant by the government that is adequate only to meet the Boards' expenses with respect to salaries and administrative costs as exemplified in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 30th June 1998

Income	1997/98 *Kshs	1996/97 *Kshs
Government grants	144,527,654	113,360,000
Fines, overdue & surcharges	197,167	209,691
Kenya National Bibliography sales	15,025	22,666
Interest received	260,128	48,797
Miscellaneous income	348,576	556,725
Rent received account	406,010	573,891
	145,754,560	115,011,770
Expenditure		
Staff expenses	110,902,898	76,373,908
Administrative expenses	21,573,796	21,773,109
Transport and operating costs	3,614,355	4,833,832
Withholding tax	39,019	
Insurance	3,745,482	2,012,311
Depreciation expenses	4,656,229	4,287,288
	144,531,779	109,280,448

Source: KNLS Board, annual audit report: July 1997- June 1998 *(74Ksh=\$1)

As mentioned above, since its inception in 1967 the KNLS has continued to receive inadequate funds from the government. However, this situation worsened following the introduction of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) in the early 1990s by the IMF and the World Bank as a condition for funding to the Kenya government. The resulting cutbacks in government expenditure have been felt by all service organisations including KNLS. Although, it is acknowledged that money is generally scarce in Kenya, many in the LIS profession in Kenya believe that, more than a lack of money, the KNLS lacks ideas and innovative thinking, and has not been effective in seeing that the library service receives its proper share of available finances from the government or identifying other sources of funds.

2.8.5 New Initiatives

For a long time the framework in which rural information services had to evolve was that of a centralised national library network. This worked against the establishment of rural libraries through local initiatives. According to Musisi (1981:29) the decision to have a centralised library system in Kenya can be attributed to the report by Sydney Hockey who had been appointed by the colonial government to organise libraries in East Africa.

As indicated earlier, Hockey believed that the only satisfactory way of developing library services in East Africa was to set up a central library organisation in each country, which was financed by the government. Due to limited funding from the government and the limited success of the centralised library system, the KNLS had to adopt different approaches in the provision of its services from the early 1990s onwards. These novel initiatives include the establishment of community-based libraries, the camel library service and the school book-box service. The community library service entails the setting up of new libraries by KNLS through partnership with the community. Through the scheme, the community provides financial support for the construction of the library and the purchase of the initial book-stock, after which the KNLS takes over the management of the library and the provision of funds to purchase the subsequent book-stock.

Camel library services were inaugurated to serve the nomadic community, which inhabit the remote and semi-arid North Eastern Province. This was after the KNLS realised that it was impossible to provide conventional mobile library services in the area, which is largely inaccessible by car. Camels are the predominant mode of transport in this region. For the project to take off the KNLS bought camels from the local community and also hired special handlers to take care of them. Special book boxes were designed to carry the books on the camels' backs. While some camels carry the books, others carry the staff and tents to erect temporary libraries in the nomadic schools and other locations. These camels traverse a large area, which would otherwise be inaccessible by car.

The primary school book-box service is a pilot project, which was started in the Karatina branch, as the library could not meet the reading demands of the students in the area due to the library's inadequate book-stock. The program is managed by means of a partnership between the KNLS, primary schools, and the local education authorities. Each participating school contributes money annually for purchase of books, which are stored in the branch library. Special boxes were designed which can contain up to 200 titles. The branch library delivers these boxes to schools and after one month the books are exchanged with those from other schools. This system ensures equitable distribution of books it is expected to be extended to other branches soon.

2.9 User Fee Concept in Kenya

According to Odada et al (1989:4) cost sharing is not a new concept in Kenya. The concept is in the “African socialism” and in the African security system. Right from independence in 1963, Kenyans have raised money through “harambee” (fund raising) to build schools, health centres, teacher’s houses, etc. Furthermore, the budgetary constraints imposed on the government by the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPS) have resulted in reduced allocation for the provision of basic needs. This motivated the government to institutionalise cost sharing in the 6th national development plan (1989-1993). To that end, the public was expected to accept the reduction in government provision of basic services such as education, health care and social infrastructure and help provide these services through cost sharing arrangements (Odada et al, 1989:4).

One of the bases for advocating cost sharing is that funds realised in the process would be used to improve the quality and quantity of the services. It was argued that by improving the quality of the service it would increase the willingness of the users to pay for the service. However, the manner in which cost sharing schemes were undertaken did not take into account the need for safety nets for the poor in the event that these measures might affect them negatively. At the moment the health, education, transport and communication sectors are targeted for cost sharing. However, many argue that for cost sharing to provide relief to the national budget there is a need for the scheme to be broadened. This is one of the driving forces behind this study; i.e. to determine the ability and willingness of the public to pay for library services if user fees were to be introduced. There is strong evidence to suggest that the objectives of the cost sharing strategy are not being met. For instance, enrolments for primary education have not risen, and the population are highly sensitive to the financial demands placed on parents. Schools still lack essential materials despite the contribution made by households. The burden on many, especially poor households, is great (Kenya Government, 1999:40).

As indicated earlier, the KNLS has been contemplating introducing user fees for some of its services. This was one of the issues raised in a workshop held by the KNLS in Nairobi in 1998 and it proved to be a contentious one. Some form of library charging for library

services in Kenya can be traced as far back as the 1930s when the library authorities in Nairobi introduced an annual subscription fee. This was after the realisation that nobody was willing to take responsibility to finance the libraries in the city and the donations and fines were too inadequate. The McMillan Library started charging an annual subscription fee ranging between Ksh.12.50 – Ksh.40.00 (1 US \$ = 75 Ksh) depending on the residency of the library user. This was considered a large amount then.

Another library, which had some form of charging, was the Seif Bin Salim Library and Free Room in Mombasa. Its constitution of 1940 stated that: there shall be two classes of membership: first and second. The fees for the first class shall be Ksh.2.00 per month, and the fee for the second class shall be Ksh.1.00 per month. The fees were payable in advance for every month. Life members were admitted upon payment of Ksh.500.00 (Mombasa Times, 1940:19). Despite the classification of members into classes, which was based on racial lines, this was an attempt to supplement library funding. Public library services in Kenya are currently offered free of charge except for those libraries run by foreign embassies like the American Cultural Centre and the British Council.

2.10 Summary of the Relevant Points of this Review

It is clear from the arguments that one of the most quoted reasons for setting up a priced information service in the public library sector is to earn money, thus contributing towards the cost of basic services. The chapter also highlighted practical or pragmatic arguments by the proponents of the user fee debate who assert that by charging user fees the quality and quantity of the services and acquisitions will improve. It is argued that if libraries fail to play an active role in the “information economy”, other players such as information brokers will fill the gap at a price, which may serve to further polarise society into two classes: the information rich and the information poor.

It also became clear that though librarians have vehemently resisted the pressure to accept library charging, there is evidence that some form of business approach to library management should be applied. It was established that to some extent that librarian's financial responsibility has widened and they are engaged in some form of income

generation. It was further noted that libraries in the developed world were no longer regarded simply as an "overhead". The library may sell its services to other departments within the organisation. In public libraries, there is pressure to diversify the resource base of the library, thus reducing the dependency on centrally allocated funds.

The negative impact of user fees should, however, not to be underestimated. It has been pointed out that in instances where user fees have been introduced both the membership and circulation of items of the library declined. However, studies by the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Library Service indicated that this may be a temporary measure since most of the library members returned after some time. It was also apparent that libraries may not be able to recover all their costs likely to be incurred, if one includes staff time spent carrying out, planning, and training for, and marketing the service, and other direct costs and overheads.

It was established that there was fear in some quarters that by re-instating user fees public libraries will become elite bodies for privileged groups who can afford them, while those who are socially and economically under-privileged will be discriminated against. It was argued that the local public library should not be turned into an institution for the elite. Thus it is imperative to remember that the basic principle of the public library is that it is a community-shared resource. Accordingly, opponents of user fees reiterate that librarians and library boards have a responsibility to see that the resource is freely accessible to facilitate the cultural and personal growth needs of the community regardless of their social or economic status.

The review has shown that the library scene in Kenya and Africa in general has not changed both in quality and quantity since its inception in the 1960's when libraries were established as tools for propagating education. The failure of African librarianship has been attributed largely to the fact that libraries are not priority items in national development and thus they are poorly funded.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a description of the research design of the study and the methods of data collection used. This research study was approached in two ways. The first was a conceptual overview of the literature on user fees in the library and information science (LIS) sector (cf. Chapter 2). The second involved an empirical study at the Kabarnet District Library in Kenya to establish users', librarians' and other stake holders' opinions on the topic (cf. Chapter 4). Before explaining the research design and tools used in the study, the research location and rationale for its selection is described.

3.2 The Research Location

This study was specifically conducted in Kenya (cf. 1.3) because the researcher is a Kenyan national and has an interest in the topic having been an employee of the Kenya National Library Service for fourteen years. The topic is also currently relevant to Kenya as the government is implementing major restructuring programs in the provision of basic services, which have suffered severely because of the poor economic situation experienced since the early 1990s. Such programs include the introduction of a cost-sharing policy in the health and the education sector. The researcher thus aimed to establish whether it is feasible to offer library services by means of a cost-sharing scheme after having considered the perceived willingness of the public to pay for such services.

Apart from the fact that the researcher is working for the Kenya National Library Services, perhaps the major reason for its selection as the study area was that the KNLS has already been contemplating introducing user fees for some of its services for some time. This suggestion was occasioned by the cuts in government funding which has affected all state corporations. The KNLS, however, has proposed that user fees be introduced without first undertaking an empirical study to establish the feasibility of such a proposal. These lacunae motivated the researcher to undertake this study at the

Kabarnet District Library. It is hoped that the results may play a role in informing the decision makers to formulate policies and guidelines, which could be used in future if user fees are to be introduced. It is also hoped that this study may justify the need for the KNLS to embark on a wider study in order to provide a more informed basis for deciding whether or not to introduce user fees.

Though public libraries are a universal phenomenon and aim to achieve the same goals, it should however, be realised that the organisational structure and experiences in each country are different. For instance, while the regional and the local government in South Africa funds public libraries, in Kenya they are financed by the central government and managed by a centralised body. Thus the results from this study cannot be generalised to be representative of other countries taking into consideration the above factors and the prevailing socio-economic conditions in each country.

The researcher had originally envisaged conducting the study in more than one branch of the KNLS, but due to limited time and limited funds was compelled to restrict the study to the Kabarnet District. The other major reason why this branch was chosen is that the researcher is familiar with this branch having worked there for ten years, five of them as the Branch Librarian. However, conscious efforts were made to ensure that this familiarity did not introduce any bias.

As outlined earlier, the Kabarnet District Library is a branch of the Kenya National Library Services (KNLS) situated in the Kabarnet municipality, of the Baringo district in the Rift Valley Province. It was opened in 1988 and currently has 38 members of staff and 33,000 volumes. The library membership stands at 12,500 of which a large portion are members of the mobile library service. It was not possible to get actual figures about the active members since membership records are kept manually. Furthermore, since the inception of the library there has been no system of membership renewal. It is therefore likely that a substantial number of members are not active. The mobile library serves 24 secondary schools spread out over the Baringo District. Due to logistical and financial

constraints the mobile service is unable to serve all potential patrons who are members of the general public.

3.3 Research Methodology

Research involves the application of a variety of standardised methods and techniques in the pursuit of valid knowledge. Precisely because scientists aim to generate truthful knowledge, they are committed to the use of objective methods and procedures that increase the likelihood of attaining validity in research. In selecting a research methodology, it is important for the researcher to keep in mind the sources of the desired information, the nature of the data to be collected and the major purpose of the research. There is a wide range of methods, which a researcher can use to collect data for research purposes (Powell, 1991:54, Mouton, 1996:35). The four basic kinds of data (historical data, experimental data, descriptive data, and analytical data) demand different methodologies, the common being the historical method, the experimental method and the survey method (which may be descriptive or analytical).

Having investigated all the above factors in relation to the research questions, the researcher was of the opinion that the survey research method was the most appropriate for this study.

3.3.1 Survey Research

Survey research has characteristics common to most other research methods, but at the same time, it exhibits certain differences. For example, survey research is generally used to gather contemporary data, while historical research is primarily concerned with past data. According to Busha and Harter (1980:54), survey research is characterised by the selection of random samples from large and small populations to obtain empirical knowledge of a contemporary nature. This knowledge allows generalisations to be made about characteristics, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes of the entire population being studied. Powell (1991:54) states that survey research is generally considered to be more appropriate for studying personal factors and for exploratory analysis of relationships.

Babbie (1995:257) adds that, survey research may be used for descriptive, explanatory and exploratory purposes. It is chiefly used in studies that have individual people as the unit of analysis. Although this method can be used for other units of analysis, such as groups or interactions, some individuals must serve as respondents. According to Bailey (1994:288) most surveys are based on cross-sectional designs, the most important feature being that they take place only once and that they reflect characteristics, behaviour, and opinions that are prevalent at that time, which could be limiting.

According to Smith (1981:150), the descriptive, enumerative or census type of survey merely attempts to describe a situation, its purpose being essentially fact finding and inventorial in nature. By investigating the distribution of some datum in the population, it describes a distribution or makes a comparison among distributions. According to (Powel, 1991:56), the basic purpose of descriptive surveys usually are to describe the characteristics of the population being studied, estimate proportions in the population, make specific predictions, and 'test' relationships. An analytical or explanatory survey on the other hand, seeks to establish connections between events or series of actions and tries to explain these connections. It examines or investigates relations among particular variables, and it is designed to establish why a casual relationship exists.

Many of the surveys conducted by librarians could be classified as status surveys because they merely assess conditions in the library, such as collection size, kinds of facilities and services available, amount of financial support, use and non-use of the library, etc. In general, many of these surveys have been fact gathering in nature; they are conducted to record the *status quo* rather than to determine relationships between variables or to test hypotheses (Busha and Harter, 1980:55).

3.3.2 Validity & Reliability

Reliability refers to the ability to obtain consistent results in successive measurements of the same phenomenon. It suggests that the same data would have been collected each time in repeated observations of the same phenomena. Validity, on the other hand, can be defined as a descriptive term used for a measure that accurately reflects the concept that it

was intended to measure - i.e. does the methodology measure what was intended to measure? Does the methodology serve to distinguish variables that it is designed to distinguish? ... (Lewis-Beck, 1994:363). Like other methods of research, surveys have special strengths and weaknesses. Surveys are probably the best method available to the social scientist interested in collecting original data for describing a population too large to observe directly. Surveys are also excellent vehicles for measuring attitudes and orientations in a large population (Babbie, 1995; 272).

During the research design stage the researcher considered the different factors that could prevent him from making valid inferences. This included avoiding selection of only those views and arguments supporting the researcher's views. Moreover, careful wording of the questions was made in order to reduce the subject's own bias. In order to minimise systematic bias various measures were utilised one of which was triangulation during the data collection stage. The research instrument was also designed to facilitate replication if necessary.

3.4 Definition of the Population & Sampling

3.4.1 Survey Population

According to Babbie (1995:201) a study population is the aggregation of elements from which the sample is actually selected. The term population and universe are used interchangeably; however, the former is more specific or better defined than a universe and is in effect a designated part of the universe. Selection of the population must precede the selection of the sample, assuming a sample is to be drawn, and is crucial to the success of the sampling stage. Selection of the population must be done carefully with regard to the selection criteria, desired size and the parameters of the study. It is also important to consider costs, in terms of money, when selecting the population. If the population is too large and expensive to manage, then the study is handicapped from the start. The members of the population must be readily available to the researcher; otherwise it will be difficult to collect the necessary data (Powell, 1991:61).

The first step in sampling is to clearly and accurately define the population of interest. It is also imperative to consider the practicalities of conducting a survey and obtaining the widest definition of what is a 'target' population. For instance, when considering registered library members as the study population, one might realise that some may be ill, absent or otherwise unavailable for the duration of the study. The eventual 'survey population' might be defined as registered members who are resident and present in the catchment area of the library during the survey period (de Jager, 1999).

The population initially envisaged for this study included staff members, the patrons and stake-holders of several branches within the KNLS network. After considering the practicalities of the research it was found to be too ambitious and beyond the scope of the researcher. Thus the researcher decided to choose a single facility (Kabarnet District Library) that could be accessed with ease and with minimum financial and time constraints.

3.4.2 Sampling

The aim of research is often to study a representative number of events or people with a view of generalising the results of the study to a defined population or universe. A census is a count of all elements in a population. Sampling is an essential aspect of surveys since it is seldom possible to survey the complete population. It is possible to carry out a census in a small organisation whereby each member in the organisation is asked to complete a questionnaire, or be the subject of an interview; however, in a large organisation it may not be economical to carry out such a census. Instead a sample can be drawn for the study. If reliable data is to be collected, the sample should be representative of the range of people and jobs in the organisation (de Jager, 1999; Fowler, 1993:135).

3.4.2.1 Sampling Categories

Sampling can be divided into two major categories: non-probability and probability sampling. In non-probability sampling, there is no way of forecasting, estimating or guaranteeing that each element in the population will be represented in the sample. In

probability sampling, the researcher can specify in advance that each segment of the population will be represented in the sample (Leedy, 1989:200). In probability sampling, the composition of the sample is derived by selecting units from those of a larger population by randomisation. Randomisation, an inferential technique, allows the selection of samples so that each individual has an equal chance of being selected. When investigators have a list of members of a universe, or population, and can accurately place individuals into homogeneous categories or strata, random samples may be selected from each stratum. This refinement of sampling is called stratification; it usually produces a more representative sample with less variation (Busha and Harter, 1980:60).

Non-probability sampling can also be divided into two types: convenience or accidental sampling, and quota sampling. Bailey (1994:960) states that in convenience or accidental sampling, the investigator merely chooses live persons as respondents. Powell, (1991:63) adds that in utilising a convenience technique, the researcher simply selects the cases that are at hand until the sample reaches the desired, designated size. Obviously, there would be relatively little if any assurance that the sample would be representative of the study population. Powell (1991:63) states that quota sampling is a type of non-probability sample that improves somewhat on the simple accidental sample. Quota sampling is the same as accidental sampling except that it takes steps to ensure that the significant, diverse elements of the study population are included.

3.4.3 Sample Frame

Defining the population is a two way process: first the target population, which one wishes to generalise, must be identified and second, the sampling frame must be constructed. The sampling frame is the sub-set of people that have a chance to be selected, given the sampling approach that is chosen. The key concept in sampling is representativeness. Unless the sample from which one may generalise 'truthfully' represents the population from which it is drawn, there is no reason to believe that the population has the same properties as those of the sample (Mouton, 1996:136). The 'sampling frame' provides the means by which a sample may be collected. In its simplest form it is a list from which respondents may be selected. Identifying the sample frame for

this study was impossible because public libraries do not have a clearly defined user community. Usually, their potential user community is the population as a whole.

3.4.4 Sampling Method used for this Study

For the purpose of this study the convenience sampling technique was used by approaching library users who happened to be present in the library at predetermined intervals during the study period. This study thus was not a random survey. Whereas, the membership register could have been used as a tool for randomisation, it is possible that not all registered members would have been available during the period of the study. On the other hand, the membership register is maintained manually and it is rarely updated. Though a postal questionnaire could have been used to reach those who would not be present during the study it was found that it would be expensive and low return rates would have been likely due to poor postal services.

The eventual survey sample for this study comprised both registered and non-members who were present during the period of the study. All patrons under the age of fifteen were excluded from this study. The decision to exclude this category was made after the results of the pilot study indicated that most of them were unable to give comprehensive information. This could be attributed to the low standards of education in most of the primary schools within the research area. Another reason for their exclusion was that their views would have counted less toward forming an opinion on whether it is feasible to introduce user fees since their guardians would be the ones likely to pay. The study thus aimed to solicit the views of adult patrons only. Individuals who were returning books on behalf of patrons were furthermore also excluded from the study. However, those individuals who were using the library even though they were not registered were included in the study. This decision was made after it was discovered during the pilot study that a substantial number of people were using the library although they were not registered.

The sample was thus drawn from persons over the age of fifteen who used the library service irrespective of whether they were registered patrons or not. All persons who

corresponded to these characteristics and who visited the library in the period, January to February 2000 were included until the maximum sample size was reached.

Apart from those patrons who visited the library, the study also covered all the professionally qualified library staff as well as the 3 staff members who were included for their long service and experience at the Kabarnet District Library, 14 schools served by the mobile library service and 5 primary schools within Kabarnet Municipality. Interviews were also conducted with 2 of the co-ordinators of local NGOs the Kabarnet Town Clerk, and other stake-holders within the Baringo district.

3.4.5 Sample Size

One of the most difficult questions to answer in survey research is how large a sample should be (Bouma, 1993:127). It is considered that the correct sample size is dependent upon the nature of the population and the purpose of the study. Usually the size of the sample depends on the size of the population to be sampled and the level of heterogeneity. The more homogenous, the smaller the sample needs are. Although general rules are hard to make without knowledge of the specific population, it is considered that 30 cases are minimal for studies in which statistical analysis is to be made. However, many researchers believe that samples should not be less than 100 to achieve fairly accurate levels of validity (Bailey, 1994:96). It was therefore decided to set the sample size for the study at 100 users/patrons. As there were only 38 staff members it was decided to target the 24 staff members who were professionally trained and as well 3 staff members because of their long service and experience.

3.5 Sources of Data

Data collecting techniques may be categorised in a number of ways depending on whether the data being collected is new, or whether existing data will be used; and the nature of the source of the data. The following summary table of objectives (in terms of the research questions posed in section 1.3.2), data requirements and data sources helped to provide a framework for the empirical component of the study.

Table 3.1: Summary of objectives, data required, data sources and data collection method.

Objective	Data required	Data sources & collection
Adequacy of KNLS funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual allocation of KNLS budget and its utilisation - Views of staff in the KNLS HQ - Views of staff members of Kabarnet District Library - Views of finance staff in the government ministry responsible for KNLS affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviewing finance staff and senior librarians at the KNLS HQ. - KNLS Annual Audit report records - Administering questionnaires and interview with staff in Kabarnet
Financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Net revenue likely to be generated from user fees - Willingness to pay and ability to pay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Views from respondents - Staff members views
Perceived quality of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Patrons' perception of availability of library materials, staff competence and attitudes, facility appearance, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administering questionnaires and interviewing patrons and staff
Services which can be offered at a fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Views of patrons and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administering questionnaires and interviewing patrons and staff
Acceptability of user fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Views of patrons and staff - Willingness to pay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administering questionnaires and interviewing patrons and staff
Likely impact of user fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Views of patrons and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administering questionnaires and interviewing staff
Partnership initiatives / supplementary roles in provision of library services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Views of local NGOs, local authority and other stakeholders - Views of patrons and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviewing NGOs coordinators and other stakeholders - Administering questionnaires and conducting interviews with patrons and staff
Alternative sources of funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Views of patrons and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administering questionnaires and interviewing staff and patrons.
Employment/utilisation of funds likely to be collected from user fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Views of finance staff in KNLS HQ. - Views of staff and patrons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviewing finance staff at the KNLS Hq - Administering questionnaires and interviewing staff and patrons.
Exemption policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Views of patrons and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administering questionnaires and interviewing patrons and staff
Effectiveness of mobile library service and funding problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Views of institutions served by the mobile - Views of library staff - Feasibility of user fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administering questionnaires to library staff and interviewing head teachers

Both primary and secondary sources were used to collect the data required for this study. Primary sources refer to manuscripts, contemporary records, or documents, which are used in writing a book or other literary compilations. They are also called 'source materials' and sometimes 'original sources'. Primarily data for this study was principally obtained from stake-holders, i.e. staff members and users (clients). The term 'user' denotes both individuals and institutional members of the library. In the case of individuals and staff members, responses were solicited by way of administering separate questionnaires (cf. appendix for questionnaires). This was followed up by interviews during which in-depth data was obtained. Views from institutional members were obtained through oral interviews with the head of the institution or teacher librarians. Interviews were also conducted with civic leaders and managers of local NGO's.

Secondary sources refer to books or unpublished literary materials in the compilation of which primary sources have been used. Secondary data for this study was obtained from government and KNLS publications. The secondary data highlighted the user fee policy, its objectives, implementation and other administrative issues in the health and education sector in Kenya. The data was important with regard to trying to assess strengths and weaknesses of the fee policy in Kenya.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

The choice of data collection mode- e.g. mailed questionnaires, telephone interviews, personal interview or group administration of questionnaires- is related directly to the research topic, the sample frame, characteristics of the sample, and available staff and facilities. One of the most far-reaching decisions a researcher must make is the way in which data is to be collected. Should an interviewer ask the questions and record the answers, or should the survey be self-administered? If an interviewer is to be used a further decision is whether the interview will take place in person or over the telephone. If the respondent is to read and answer questions without an interviewer, there are choices about how to present the questionnaire to the respondents (Fowler, 1993:54). Although it is practically impossible for any researcher to identify and control observer effects, he or she has the responsibility to plan and execute a study in a manner that will

minimise various threats to validity. One of the methods used to control these effects is triangulation or multiple operationalisms. According to Mouton (1996:156), the underlying assumption is that because various methods complement each other their respective shortcomings can be balanced out.

Having taken the above factors into consideration the researcher decided to employ different data collection methods, i.e. questionnaires, interviews and documentary sources were used for this study. In order to validate some of the responses as stated earlier, interviews were conducted after the questionnaires were administered to obtain in-depth data for clarity.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are often used in surveys as the primary data collection instrument. However, care must be taken to develop the kind of questions, or survey items, that will accurately measure what the investigator wants to know. The purpose of research is to obtain valid and reliable information so that specific hypotheses can be tested or research questions answered (Busha and Harter, 1980:61). The best approach to this task appears to be the identification of as many facets of the specific research problem as possible. The recognition of pertinent factors - including dependent and independent variables- will enable a more systematic approach to the conduct of surveys.

3.6.1.1 Construction of Questionnaires

The preparation of the questionnaire entailed writing questions or items that elicited the required information. Several types of questions were utilised in this study including factual, opinion, attitude, etc. The factual questions were posed so that relationships between the independent and dependent variables could be determined. The basic design of the questionnaire (cf. Appendix I) consisted of a heading, which gives the purpose and main references (name, date, etc.); a classification section requesting data to be used for analysing and summarising the total data (age, job title, etc.) and a data section requesting the actual data being sought.

Both closed and open-ended questions were provided. Closed questions were used when the respondent was required to answer by choosing between a number of alternatives. They were designed to reduce the possibility of obtaining ambiguous answers and were used to obtain straightforward answers. In order to get different opinions or strength of preferences, a rating scale was used where appropriate. According to Moore (1987:18), a rating scale provides more scope for the respondent to express an opinion, but retains a sufficient amount of control to ensure that information is capable of being analysed.

The open-ended questions were designed to produce detailed answers to complex problems, however, this created problems when analysing the data. The open-ended questions enabled the respondents to formulate and record answers on their own. Questions were kept as short as possible to avoid ambiguity and simple English was used to facilitate easy comprehension taking into consideration the fact that the potential respondents were from diverse educational backgrounds. Emotional words were avoided as far as possible. The open-ended questions were important in order to obtain the feelings of the respondents and also to give them the ability to express their attitude towards the study. Efforts were made to catch the interest of the respondents by designing the questionnaire in an attractive manner.

There were two categories of questionnaires designed for the study. The first one was aimed at the library patrons and the other was for staff members. The patrons' questionnaire consisted of four major parts. The first section clarified the purpose of the study, highlighting the fact that the views of the users were of paramount importance to the study and assuring respondents that confidentiality was guaranteed. The second part consisted of questions related to socio-economic, educational background, etc. of the user. Part three, consisted of questions related to the perceived quality of services offered. The last part consisted of questions on willingness and the ability of respondents to pay for services and suggestions regarding special exemptions that the respondents suggest might make.

The staff questionnaire (cf. Appendix II) also consisted of four sections. The first section, as in the patron's questionnaire included a note to the respondents explaining the purpose of the study, highlighting the fact that the views of the staff were of importance to the study, and assuring them that confidentiality was guaranteed. The second part consisted of staff experience and perceived quality of services offered. Part three, consisted of questions pertaining to fee policy, proposed user fees and possible exemptions that could be made. Part four, consisted of questions on the provision of mobile library services. The last part was designed to elicit responses on the viability of the mobile library service and to make the necessary recommendations.

3.6.1.2 Administration of Questionnaires

There are three main methods of administering survey questionnaires to a sample of respondents. Although, the mail survey is the typical method used in self-administered studies, there are several other common methods. At times it may be appropriate to administer the questionnaire to a group of respondents gathered at the same place at the same time. Recent experiments have been conducted with regard to the home delivery of questionnaires and computer based questionnaires (Babbie, 1995:258).

The questionnaires for this study were administered to library users above the age of 15. The researcher had also envisaged distributing questionnaires to junior library members. However, after conducting a pilot survey this was found to be impractical since the pupils could not give adequate information as their level of comprehension was low. As indicated earlier, this could be largely attributed to the poor standard of education in most of the local schools. The researcher also considered that the views of the adults would be more reliable and relevant to the issue of library charges.

Self-administered questionnaires were utilised for this study. The distribution of questionnaires was carried out between January and February 2000 at the Kabarnet District Library. On average five respondents were issued with questionnaires each day until the required sample size of 100 was reached. Questionnaires were handed out mostly in the morning as soon as the library opened and in the afternoon after lunch when

a high readership turnout is recorded. Library patrons entering the library were approached and asked to participate as respondents. Questionnaires were handed out to those patrons who were willing to participate and they were encouraged to return the questionnaires on the same day. However, a few respondents preferred to take the questionnaires away and returned them later. An indication of how long it would take to complete the questionnaire was given orally.

The two research assistants and the researcher carried out the distribution of questionnaires in the library; however, in their absence the librarian on duty did this. Before the questionnaires were handed out, clarification was sought from the respondents to ensure that they had not already participated in the study to avoid double responses. The researcher and his two assistants were on hand to assist the respondents with questions which needed clarification. The two research assistants were employees of the KNLS who had been instructed earlier by the researcher on research procedures and also made to understand all the questions to ensure uniformity.

Staff questionnaires were distributed to all sections of the library through the section heads in proportion to the staff numbers. The staff respondents included both the professionally trained staff and the unqualified staff; the latter consisted of the clerical staff and a few support staff who had worked in the branch for a long period. The questionnaires were distributed on Mondays and collected on Fridays each week. However, those who completed the questionnaires early were encouraged to return them immediately. The distribution of questionnaires was carried out at the same time as those of the patrons, i.e. January and February 2000. Though the staff respondents were fewer, the distribution was carried out over a relatively long period since some staff members were on leave or off duty.

3.6.2 Interview Survey

The interview survey is an alternative method of collecting survey data. Rather than ask respondents to read questionnaires and enter their own answers, researchers ask questions orally and record respondents' answers. Interview surveys offer many advantages. For

example, they generally produce fewer incomplete questionnaires. Although respondents may skip questions in a self-administered questionnaire, this is not likely in an interview survey (Babbie, 1995:261). Interview surveys may have a great deal in common with questionnaire surveys. Large-scale interview exercises, are no more than questionnaires administered in person. They require an interview schedule, which needs to be designed in the same way as a questionnaire (Bouma, 1993:28). The above factors were taken into consideration when interview schedules (cf. Appendix III) were designed for this study. Further thought was given as to how the questions would sound when spoken.

According to Moore (1987:28), the main advantage of an interview survey is that they make it possible to achieve a complex response with different categories of a sample, and thus ensure the statistical validity of the results. The second is that it is possible to collect more complex information, and where necessary, qualifying answers and generally obtain results in greater depth. The main disadvantage with interview surveys is that the information obtained is often difficult to analyse due to computer coding procedures though it may be possible to use quantitative methods for some of it.

The interview method was used both as a primary and secondary data collection technique. Interviews were used to collect primary data from institutions served by the mobile service, head teachers of primary schools, co-ordinators of local NGO's, the Kabarnet Town Clerk and other stake holders. Interviews were also used as a secondary data collection technique in order to supplement and clarify certain ambiguous information obtained from the questionnaires both in the pilot and in the actual study. Both the staff respondents and the patrons were interviewed in that regard.

3.6.2.1 The Interview Process

The researcher had envisaged interviewing staff in the ministry of social services, which handles KNLS affairs, in order to collect in-depth information on KNLS funding and other policy matters, but this was not possible due to various factors. Firstly, there was a major restructuring in the government after the amalgamation of several ministries and there was no clarity as to which department would oversee KNLS matters. The second

reason, though not tenable, was that most of the ministry staff refused to provide information citing the governments' secret act, which forbids government employees from providing certain government information.

As indicated earlier, interviews were scheduled to take place on the same day the mobile library was visiting institutions. Before these institutions were visited, an appointment was made in advance with the head of the institution through the branch librarian. Upon arrival in the institution the researcher paid a courtesy call on the head teacher who would then proceed with the interview or direct the researcher to another person selected by the institution for the interview. In the absence of the head teacher either the deputy head teacher or the teacher librarian was interviewed. In the few schools, which had libraries, interviews were also conducted with the school librarian. On average two to three interviews were carried out per day. Appointments were also obtained with the town clerk and the co-ordinators of NGO's well in advance of the interview.

The researcher conducted all the above interviews; while the research assistants carried out those in the library, which were mainly to seek clarification on certain issues arising from the questionnaires. Most of the respondents had reservations about being tape-recorded; however, a precaution had been taken by designing the interview schedule in such a way that information could be recorded during the interview. Before the interview started the interviewees were made aware of the purpose of the study and asked to be as objective as possible. Questions were designed to be as simple as possible. First the respondents were asked to give factual information about the institution or organisation after which questions pertaining to the library services were asked. The respondents were prompted as much as possible to elicit detailed information.

3.7 Timing of the Study

It is considered that the timing of research can affect its results. Taking into consideration the timing of this study, it is possible that some factors may have influenced its results. First, this study was carried out between January and February 2000, which was soon after the Millennium celebrations when a high movement of people within the country

was recorded. It is most likely that people were still settling down after the festive season. Secondly, the academic year in Kenya starts in January and most schools had just opened. As a result there were very few students visiting the library particularly those in secondary school. Students above the age of 15 were included in the sample, and it is surmised that this category is under represented in the sample. This is largely due to the fact that most schools in Kenya have boarding facilities and most students are not allowed out of school except for vacations. In addition, the economic condition during the time of the study may have also influenced the results of this study. Kenya is in a period of economic recession which has eroded the purchasing power of most Kenyans' especially those with limited income. This may have had direct implications on the objective of this study, which is to determine the willingness and ability of respondents to pay user fees.

3.8 Pilot Study

According to Oppenheim (1992:87) questionnaires do not emerge fully-fledged; they have to be created and adapted, fashioned and developed to maturity after several abortive test flights. Every aspect of the survey has to be tried beforehand to ensure that it works as intended. According to Fowler (1993:102), self-administered survey instruments deserve more pre-testing than interview survey instruments, because during the interviews problems that researchers did not solve in the design of the survey instrument can often be resolved.

A pre-test gives the researcher an opportunity to identify questionnaire items that tend to be misunderstood by the participants. But in addition to testing the actual questionnaire items, the pre-test should include interviews with some or all of the pre-test participants. Such pre-tested interviews are necessary to identify problem questions, poor instructions, and unnecessary or missing questions, and to obtain general reaction to the instrument. A pre-test also offers certain advantages beyond helping to refine the data collection instrument. It can permit a preliminary testing of the hypothesis or research question, point out a variety of problems not anticipated that relate to the design and methodology,

and facilitate a practice run of the statistical procedures to be used (Powell, 1991: 99, 100).

In order to test the validity of the questionnaire, a small pilot study was carried out in December 1999. Questionnaires were administered to seven patrons and five staff members. The pilot survey was carried out in the same location where the actual data collection eventually took place. During the pilot study the respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire as they would in an actual survey. After completing the questionnaires the researcher had a discussion with both the staff members and patrons who agreed to take part as respondents in the pilot study in order to clarify some issues regarding the questionnaire. Some of the issues discussed were: whether the instructions were clear, whether the questions were clear, and whether there were any problems in understanding what kind of answers were expected.

This pilot study was very useful as it generated valid comments that enabled the researcher to alter the original questionnaire accordingly. The pre-test indicated that some of the respondents had based their answers on their knowledge of other KNLS branches, in which they had worked before or made use of the branches' services. During the actual survey the respondents were asked to base their answers on their experiences of the Kabarnet library only. The pre-test also enabled the researcher to find out how long it takes to complete the survey instrument which enabled the researcher to notify the respondents accordingly in the subsequent study (cf.4.1.3.1).

3.9 Data Processing and Data Entry

For computers to work, they must be able to read the data, which has been collected from a study. The final stage of ensuring data that can be analysed to provide valid evidence is the coding of the answers into numbers or other labels representing the responses. A code is a set of rules that translates answers into numbers (Fowler, 1993:125). Where response alternatives were provided, numbers were assigned to a given set of answers and the missing data was accounted for by inserting the symbol N/A in the appropriate cells. When respondents were asked to answer questions in their own words the researcher had

to identify categories that emerged from answers, as well as imposing order on answers that were obtained before being coded. A student who is currently pursuing an MPhil degree in economics assisted the researcher during the coding process. The researcher had to verify the data for any errors before the analysis was started. Once the data was coded and checked, the process of data entry started. During the data entry process the verbal and numeric data collected from the questionnaires and interviews was entered into a computer, principally as numeric data codes. The Microsoft Excel software was used for data entry before transferring it to the STATA statistical package, which was used to analyse the data (cf. 4.1.2).

An outline of the data analysis will be given in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the responses obtained from the questionnaires and interviews shall be presented by focusing on the issues emphasised in the questionnaire. To a large extent this section has been organised in a sequence similar to the questions in the questionnaire (cf. Appendix I&II). However, some of the related questions will be grouped together. The chapter is divided into six sections. The first section presents the results pertaining to the responses of the patrons of the Kabarnet District Library. The second section presents the responses pertaining to the staff of the Kabarnet District Library. The third section presents the responses from the institutions served by the mobile library. The fourth section presents the responses from the co-ordinators of local NGO's. The fifth section discusses the responses obtained from primary schools within the Kabarnet Municipality and the last section discusses the response from the Kabarnet Town Clerk.

Both the results of cross tabulating several different variables in addition to univariate analysis, which involved analysis of a single variable, are presented in this chapter. Cross tabulations were conducted mainly for those responses which were collected from the patrons, since their views are considered to be of more importance than those of the staff members in determining the results of the study. Furthermore, only those results, which were found to be relevant to the study are reported. The results from cross tabulations reported in this chapter relate to those which involved the occupation, income, and level of education and training of the respondents. The other independent variables, i.e. age, gender and location (residential area) were utilised to a limited extent after it was found that they did not have a significant effect on the study. Some tables were consciously left out to avoid the document being too extensive. Most of the respondents were unable to give comprehensive information when they were given a chance to specify 'other'

reasons with regard to questions which had options for them to choose from. Thus all the responses obtained in regard to the above were left out.

4.2 Data Analysis

Data was analysed using STATA software. STATA is a full-featured statistical program for Windows, Macintosh or UNIX computers. It combines ease of speed, a library of pre-programmed analytical and data-management capabilities, and programmability that allows users to invent and add further capabilities as needed (Hamilton, 1998:4). Graphs were generated through Excel software.

4.2.1 Questionnaire Study

4.2.1.1 Response Rate

4.2.1.2 Library Users

Despite it not being an ideal time of the year to conduct a survey a surprisingly high response rate was procured. Out of the he 100 questionnaires distributed to the library users 81 were returned. Thus, a response rate of 81% was achieved. Since 7 respondents were unable to supply sufficient details, calculations were finally based on the replies from 74 respondents, representing 74% of the survey. Despite the high response rate it is important to note that some respondents thought that the study was a prelude to KNLS introducing user fees. Despite assurances to the respondents on the purpose of the study and what it aimed to achieve, it was evident during the actual research that a few respondents didn't believe the assurances given and therefore didn't want to volunteer information. This may account for some of the questionnaires which were not returned.

4.2.1.3 Library Staff Responses

Out of the 32 questionnaires distributed to staff members, 30 were returned representing a response rate of 93%. Since 3 respondents were unable to supply adequate information, calculations have been based on the responses from 27 staff members. Some of the untrained and support staff declined to offer information as they felt they were not competent enough to answer the questions. However, a few months before the start of the

study, a memo had been circulated from the KNLS headquarters instructing staff not to divulge information on matters pertaining to KNLS without permission from the director. Though this was long before the study, one can't rule out the possibility that this may have affected staff members' willingness to participate in the study.

4.2.1.4 Institutional Responses

As indicated earlier, the mobile only provides services to schools because of limited resources. It was not possible to survey all schools within the research period. Thus only 14 out of the 24 schools served by the mobile were visited. Students were excluded from the study after it was found that the most of them were using the library for the first time and could not give comprehensive information. In some instances, teacher librarians were asked to pinpoint competent students for interviews but this was not helpful. The researcher had to contend with views from the head teachers and teacher librarians.

SECTION 1: RESPONSES FROM LIBRARY PATRONS

For the purposes of clarity the researcher has in the discussion of the tables rounded all the percentages to approximate.

4.3.1 Categorisation of Users by Age

(cf. Question one of questionnaire, Appendix I)

Table 4.1: Age categories of users

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cum.
15-24	22	29.73	29.73
25-34	33	44.59	74.32
35-44	18	24.32	98.65
45-44	1	1.35	100.00
55-	-	-	-
Total	74	100.00	

Source: Survey Data

From the above table it is evident that 45% of the respondent's ages ranged between 25-34 years. Those in the 15-24-age category comprised 30% of the respondents and the majority of these were students. Those between 35-44 years were 24% and only 1%

comprised those between 45-54 years. There were no observations for those above 55 years of age. This could be attributed to claims often made, though subject to further research, that older Kenyans don't have a reading culture. On the other hand, pension schemes in Kenya are very poor and most people upon retirement are compelled to engage in income generating activities such as farming and other commercial activities leaving little time for leisure, such as reading.

4.3.2 Categorisation of Respondents According to Gender

(cf. Question two of questionnaire, Appendix I)

Table 4.2: Respondents according to Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent.	Cum.
Female	12	16.22	16.22
Male	62	83.78	100.00
Total	74	100.00	

Source: Survey Data

Out of the 74 respondents 84% were male while 16% were female. This is a worrying disparity given that more than 50% of the Kenyan population is comprised of women. There may be different factors, which may have contributed to this disparity. Firstly, the education system in Kenya has for a long time been in favour of men. Secondly, there is a tendency for women not to develop their careers once they are employed. Kabarnet is a semi-urban area and most women are involved with managing their families. It can therefore be assumed that women may be engaged in activities which may preclude them from visiting the library. However, the gender imbalance could have been different if the majority of the respondents were students (cf. 4.2.3 for reasons why students were excluded from the study). From the current enrolment statistics more than 60% of the student population in Kenya are female. The differences in gender could have been different in an urban setting since the level of educated women would be higher.

4.3.3 Categorisation of Respondents According to Locality

(cf. Question three of questionnaire, Appendix I)

Table 4.3: Location of respondents

Location	Frequency	Percent	Cum
Rural	24	32.43	32.43
Urban- Kabarnet	48	64.86	97.30
Others	2	2.70	100.00
Total	74	100.00	

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.3 indicates that the vast majority (65%) of the respondents resided within the Kabarnet Municipality. 32% of the respondents resided in rural areas while 3% of the respondents did not specify their locality. The KNLS has a policy to register mostly individuals who reside within the Kabarnet Municipality and its environs and this may explain the disparity between the respondents who reside in rural and urban areas. This decision was taken after it was discovered that individuals who resided far from the library had difficulty in returning books after the two-week loan period.

4.3.4: Categorisation of Respondents According to Occupation

(cf. Question four of questionnaire, Appendix I)

Table 4.4: Occupations of respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percent	Cum
Civil servant	26	35.14	35.14
Farmer	2	2.70	37.84
House Wife	2	2.70	40.54
Professional	5	6.76	58.11
Student	14	18.92	64.86
Teacher	12	16.22	83.78
Others	13	17.57	100.00
Total	74	100.00	

Source: Survey Data

The single most evident group of users were civil servants who comprised 35% of the respondents and they were followed by teachers at 16% (although they could also be loosely categorised as civil servants). The overwhelming presence of this group can be attributed to the fact that the library is located in an administrative centre (cf. 1.2.1 & 3.2). 19% of the respondents comprised students who are studying in middle level

colleges within the municipality. Students in primary and secondary schools were consciously excluded from this study due to various factors. Firstly, almost all secondary schools in the area have boarding facilities and students are rarely allowed outside the school apart from the school holidays. Secondly, the primary schools within the municipality have specific days and times when they visit the library per week. In most cases, students are found in the library during the weekend or school holidays. As stated earlier, the pilot results indicated that most of the students could not give comprehensive information. Housewives and farmers each constituted 3% of the population. Professionals (i.e. lawyers, doctors, journalists, etc.) comprised 7% of the population, while the 'other' categories represented 18%. The latter includes businessmen/women in the community.

4.3.5 Categorisation of Users According to Level of Education and Training

(cf. Question five of questionnaire, Appendix I)

Table 4.5: levels of education and training

Phenomena	Frequency	Percent.	Cum.
Less than 8 years of schooling	2	2.70	2.70
Secondary education	25	33.78	33.78
Vocational training	2	2.70	36.48
College training	22	29.73	68.81
University degree/diploma	18	24.32	93.23
Professional training (e.g. CPA)	5	6.76	100.00
Total	74	100.00	

Source: Survey Data

The education system in Kenya comprises of 2 years of pre-school, 8 years of primary education, 4 years of secondary education, 2 or 3 years of college education and 4 years or more of university education. Table 4.5 indicates that 34% of the respondents had attained secondary education and 30% of the respondents surveyed had college training. 24% of the respondents were university graduates. In addition 3% also had vocational training, while 3% had received less than eight years of primary education. The above percentages include those of students who are still pursuing studies at the different levels. It is apparent from Table 4.5 that the majority library users have attained tertiary education of education. When those who have attained college and university education

are grouped together they comprised 54% of the total respondents, a significantly high proportion of the population.

4.3.6 Categorisation According to Income Per Month

(cf. Question six of questionnaire, Appendix I)

The net income of the various categories of respondents is crucial in determining their ability to pay user fees and the eventual sustainability of the scheme. This information is also necessary in determining whether it is economical to introduce a cost-sharing scheme taking into consideration its likely implications on the library in terms of finance and staff time, which will be required to manage the scheme. Accordingly, the respondents were asked to give their income range per month.

Table 4.6: Average income per month *(74 Ksh = \$1)

Income range in *Ksh.	Frequency	Percent	Cum.
No income	20	27.03	27.03
Less than 1000	2	2.70	29.73
1000-5000	11	14.86	44.59
5000-15000	33	44.59	89.18
15000-25000	5	6.76	95.94
25000-35000	3	4.05	100.00
Total	74	100.00	

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.6 shows that 45% of the respondents' monthly income ranged between *Ksh. 5000-15000 per month. This range reflects the average monthly salary of middle level earners in a rural-urban area like Kabarnet. 27% stated that, they had no monthly income. 15% of the respondents indicated that their monthly income was between *Ksh.1000-5000. Only 9% had an income range between *Ksh.15000-25000. 3% indicated that their income was less than Ksh.1000 per month, and 4% of the respondents indicated that they had an income of Ksh.25000-35000.

4.3.7 Perceived Quality of Service

(cf. Question seven of questionnaire, Appendix I)

The way staff members and patrons view the quality of basic library service is crucial if user fees were to be introduced. One of the reasons for introducing a fee policy is to raise the quality of the service. With this in mind, respondents were asked to rate some features of the services currently offered by the library. Table 4.7 shows that the majority (68%) of the users agree that the overall quality of services is good, while 24% rate it as excellent. It is further clear that the majority of the respondents rated the library features highly (if the good and excellent categories are together). The only feature that is not rated as highly as the others, is the availability of books.

Table 4.7: Ratings of basic library service features in percentages (%)

Features	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	V. Poor
Availability of books	25.68	48.68	24.32	1.35	-
Availability of newspapers, etc.	28.38	59.46	12.16	-	-
Competence of staff	37.84	52.70	9.76	-	-
Attitude of staff towards public	32.43	60.81	6.76	-	-
Appearance of building	62.16	33.78	4.05	-	-
Reading environment	63.51	29.73	6.76	-	-
Overall quality of service	24.32	67.57	8.11	-	-

Source: Survey Data

The majority of the respondents regarded the appearance of the building and its reading environment as excellent. The attitude of the staff and their competence were also highly rated by the majority of the respondents.

4.3.8 Improvements of Library Services

(cf. Question eight of the questionnaire, Appendix I)

Taking into consideration question seven the respondents were asked which areas of the basic library service they would like to see improved if user fees were to be introduced. Table 4.8 shows that the need for more books was ranked high with 41% of the respondents indicating this need. Since the library was established in 1988 very few books have been added and these few additions have been mainly books obtained by

means of donations from the UK through the Book Aid agency. Many of these books, however, are not relevant for local needs.

Table 4.8: Suggested improvements of Library Services

	Frequency	Percent	Cum
Additional books	30	40.54	40.54
Relevant books (new ed.)	20	24.32	67.56
Competent staff	1	1.35	68.91
Automation	5	6.76	75.67
Others	18	24.32	100.00
Total	74	100.00	

Source: Survey Data

The results further shows that 41% of the respondents indicated that there was a need for additional books, 24% indicated that there was a need for new editions and books relevant to the needs of the users, 7% want the library to introduce an online catalogue and Internet service and 24% gave other diverse reasons such as the need for study carrels, more reading tables, etc. Only 1% indicated the need for more competent staff. Although the respondents had indicated that the overall library service is good (cf. 4.3.7) it is apparent that this response may be typical of human nature to give a positive response when asked a question when in actual sense they mean the opposite. On the other hand, it is highly doubtful if the respondents had the ability to assess the library service given that most of them associate the library with books and the other features could be secondary.

4.3.9 Awareness of Ancillary Services that could be offered

(cf. Question nine of the questionnaire, Appendix I)

Table 4.9 Respondents Awareness of ancillary Library Services

	Yes	No
Book reservations	59.46	40.54
Inter-library loans (ILL)	10.81	89.19
Postal library service	18.92	81.08
Institutional membership	74.32	25.68
Mobile library	97.30	2.70
Reference service	75.68	24.32

Source: Survey Data

Apart from getting the views of users on various aspects of the basic library service, it was also necessary to determine if they were aware of additional services offered by the library. Table 4.9 shows that 59% said that they were aware of the availability of the book reservations facility, but follow up interviews indicated that they have not utilised the service because it is inefficient. The vast majority (89%) of the respondents indicated that they were not aware of the possibility of an inter-library loan (ILL) service. This is not surprising as the ILL service is not offered on a regular basis since it is very expensive to run. The vast majority (81%) of the respondents were also not aware of the possibility of a postal service. Once again, this is not surprising as the postal library service is also in abeyance because it is too expensive to run. 74% of the respondents said that they are aware that the library offers institutional service to schools. The mobile library is often regarded as the flagship of the branch, and 97% of the users said they know about this service. Though the library doesn't have a designated reference librarian, it was interesting to note that 75% of the respondents said that they were aware of the reference service.

4.3.10 Reasons For Using the Library

(cf. Question ten of the questionnaire, Appendix I)

According to the literature public libraries are established to provide access to information and knowledge to all. Thus the respondents were asked to state their main reason of using the library.

Table 4.10: Reasons for using Library

Purpose	Frequency	Percent	Cum
Use library mostly for Educational purposes	22	29.73	29.73
Use library as a source of information	25	33.78	63.51
Use library mostly for leisure	17	22.97	86.49
Borrowing books for other persons	3	4.05	90.54
Use library mostly as a study venue	7	9.46	100.00
Total	74	100.00	

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.10 shows that the library is used by the patrons for various reasons. The largest proportion (34%) of the respondents indicated that the library was their main source of information. 30% of the respondents stated that they were using the library for educational purposes. 22% of the respondents stated that they were using the library for leisure purposes. 9% of the respondents stated that they were using the library specifically as a study venue while 4% of them stated that they only borrowed books from the library for others, and don't use other library facilities.

Table 4.10.1: Utilisation of library according to level of education and training (%)

	Educational	Information	Leisure	Other persons	Study venue
8 Years	-	-	-	33.33	14.29
secondary educ.	22.73	28	52.94	33.33	14.29
Vocational	-	8	-	-	-
A Level	-	-	-	-	-
College	22.27	44	17.65	33.33	14.29
University	36.36	20	11.76	--	42.86
Prof. Educ.	13.64	-	5.88	-	-

Source: Survey Data

It is indicated in the literature that the needs of library patrons will vary accordingly when factors such as gender, educational level, occupation, locality (i.e. rural or urban), etc are taken into consideration. When the respondents who answered this question were classified according to their level of education and training it was found that the largest proportion (36%) of those who indicated that they were using the library for educational purposes had attained university education. Amongst the other respondents who gave the above reason 27% had obtained college education, 23% had attained secondary education while 14% had professional training in various fields.

In total 44% of the respondents who considered the library as their main source of information were college graduates. The other category of respondents who had the same view included university graduates (20%), 28% had secondary school education, while 8% had vocational training.

The largest proportion 53% of those who use the library for leisure had attained secondary education, 18% were college graduates, 12% were university graduates and 6% had professional training. Out of the respondents who indicated that they were using the library as a study venue 43% of them were university graduates. Those who had secondary, professional, college, and eight years of education each comprised 14%.

4.3.11 Awareness of User Fees Policies in Kenya

(cf. Question eleven of the questionnaire, Appendix I)

Acceptability of a user fee policy by users and staff members is important for the policy to be introduced. It often happens that policy makers impose a policy without necessarily explaining implied objectives of such a policy. This was evidenced when the Kenya government hurriedly introduced user fees in the health sector in 1989 only to be withdrawn after two months due to opposition by the public. It was only after a major review that the fees were re-introduced.

Taking the above factors into consideration the respondents were asked if they were aware of the general user fee policy that already existed in Kenya (cf. 2.9), and if they have participated in it. It was hoped that by focusing their minds on the this scheme the respondents would be able to state rationally whether library services could also be offered through a similar scheme. Their responses show that 68% of the users are aware of the user fee policy in the health and education sector in Kenya. In addition, 85% of the respondents also stated that they have paid for services through the scheme. In order to obtain various viewpoints on the above issue those respondents who answered this question were categorised according to factors, which could influence their awareness such as occupation, age, locality, and their level of education training.

Due to proximity to information sources it is possible that individuals who reside in urban areas are more informed than those who reside in rural areas are. Thus it was necessary to determine whether there was disparity in awareness of user fees between the respondents residing in the two distinct locations. From the analysis it is evident that the vast majority

of the respondents were aware of the scheme irrespective of whether they resided in rural or urban areas.

4.3.12 General Opinion on User Fees in Relation to Library Services

(cf. Question twelve and thirteen of questionnaire, Appendix I)

Apart from obtaining information on the respondents' awareness of the user fees policy, their general opinion on the subject was sought in order to ascertain whether the general assumptions which have been put forward regarding user fees are true (cf. 4.2.18 for specific details on likely impact of user fees). Some of the assumptions, which have been put forward by opponents of user fees, and which needed to be tested included the notion that user fees might affect the poor negatively and that they might be discriminated against due to inability to pay for services. On the other hand, it was also necessary to determine whether user fees could enable some of the patrons to identify with the library and also to value its services. The survey results indicate that 85% of the respondents have paid for services in the health and other sectors through the cost sharing policy. Whereas the above question was intended to solicit information regarding the concept of user fee policy in general, it is evident from the responses that the respondents limited their views only to the provision library service.

Table 4.11: Users' Opinion on User Fees

Opinion	Frequency	Percent	Cum
Affect the poor	19	27.03	27.03
Identify with the service	9	12.17	39.20
Result from poor policies and mismanagement	13	17.57	46.77
Supplement library service	28	37.84	84.61
Double taxation	1	1.35	85.96
None	3	4.05	100.00
Total	74	100.00	

Source: Survey Data

When asked about their general opinion about user fees Table 4.11 shows that 38% of the respondents said that they had no objection since they will be supplementing the library service. To some extent, this could be attributed to the Kenyan national motto "harambee" (self-help), which has facilitated the construction of schools, teacher houses,

churches, hospitals, etc. However, 27% of the respondents believe that cost sharing will affect the poor in society. 18% of the respondents indicated that user fees are unnecessary as they were convinced that the poor funding of library resources is a result of poor policies and the mismanagement of resources within the public sector. 12% of the respondents indicated that user fees would make library users identify themselves more with the library and also value its services. 1% stated that user fees would amount to double taxation while 4% had no opinion.

Table 4. 11.1: User Opinion on Fees according to Level of Education and Training

Level of education	Affect the poor	Identify with service	Result from poor policies and mismanagement	Supplement library services	Double taxation	None
Less than 8 years	5.26	-	-	-	-	-
Secondary education	42.11	20.00	53.85	28.57	-	-
Vocational	-	-	-	3.57	-	-
College training	15.79	20.00	15.38	42.86	100.00	66.67
University education	26.32	60.00	7.69	21.43	-	-
Professional training	10.53	-	15.38	3.57	-	33.33

Source: Survey Data

In order to determine the degree by which the respondents were able to conceptualise the question that solicited their general opinion on user fees, those who answered this question were categorised according to their level of education. The results as illustrated in Table 4.11.1 indicated that of the respondents who held the view that user fees might affect the poor, the largest proportion (42%) had attained secondary education and 26% of the respondents were university graduates. The majority (60%) of the respondents who believed that user fees could make the patrons identify themselves more readily with the library were university graduates. The majority of those who held the view that user fees are unnecessary and poor funding can be attributed to lack of policy and mismanagement had obtained secondary education (54%). The largest proportion (43%) of those who held the view that user fees would supplement library services had college education, 29% had secondary education while 21% were university graduates. The only respondent who stated that user fees would amount to double taxation had vocational training.

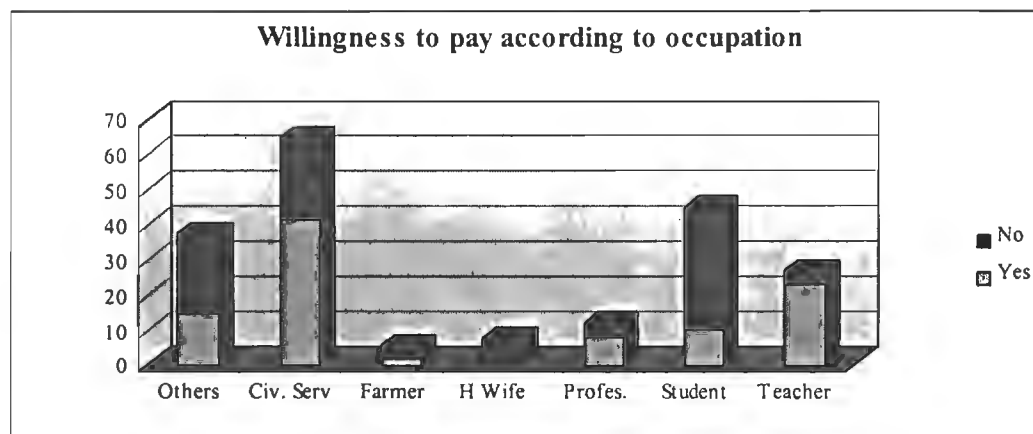
4.3.13 Willingness to Pay

(cf. Question fourteen of the questionnaire, Appendix I)

The willingness and ability of the library patrons to pay user fees is one of the most important factors which could determine whether it is feasible to have user fees introduced. The respondents were therefore asked to indicate their willingness to pay for services if the KNLS was to introduce a user fee policy. The vast majority (66%) of the respondents stated that they would be willing to pay for services they would receive. 34% of the respondents indicated that they did not expect to pay, while 1% were not certain. Those who did not expect to pay for services gave several reasons to justify their view. For instance, 68 % of the users who are not willing to pay said that library services should be free. 11% cited the lack of income, while 9% said that provision of library services is a government responsibility.

The respondents who answered positively to this particular question were then further classified according to their gender, level of education, occupation, etc. As indicated earlier 66% respondents indicated that that they were willing to pay if user fees were to be introduced by the KNLS. When these respondents are classified according to gender, 44 (92%) were male while 4 (8%) were female. On the other hand when these respondents are further classified according to their occupations as illustrated in Figure 4.1 it is evident that civil servants were the largest occupational group, as they comprised 40 percent of those willing to pay. The next largest category were the teachers at 23%. Only 5 (10%) students indicated their willingness to pay and it is very likely that some of these respondents were from the Baringo Development Institute, a government training institute based in Kabarnet, which offers in-service training for civil servants.

Figure 4.1: Willingness to pay according to occupation



Source: Survey Data

From the analysis it is evident that out of the 26 (34%) respondents who were not willing to pay user fees, the largest proportion 35% were students. The remainder of those who were not willing to pay included civil servants (23%), respondents who were grouped together (which included bankers, business people, etc) comprised 23%, 8% were housewives, while farmers, professionals and teachers comprised 4% each.

4.3.14 Reasons for Unwillingness to Pay

(cf. Question fifteen of questionnaire, Appendix I)

Table 4.12 Reasons for unwillingness to pay

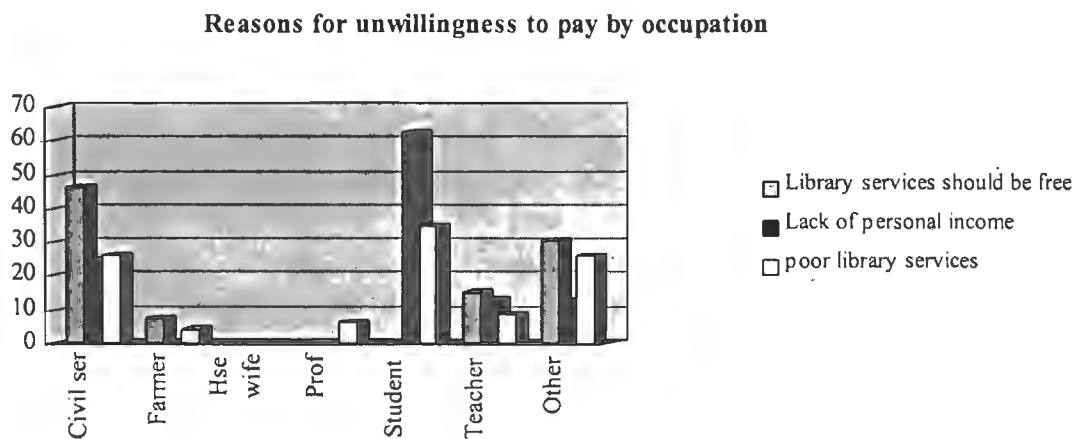
Reason	Yes (%)	No (%)	N/A (%)
Library services should be free	18	14	69
Lack of personal income	11	20	68
Poor library services	3	28	69

Source: Survey Data

As indicated earlier, the success of a cost sharing policy will depend to a large extent on the willingness of the patrons to participate in such a scheme. Thus it was necessary to identify those respondents who were not willing to pay if cost sharing was to be introduced and the reasons behind this. As mentioned previously, user fees have been introduced in Kenya without getting the views of the public only to be suspended due to public reaction. A case in point is when user fees were introduced in the health sector in

Kenya. As indicated in Table 4.12, 18% of the respondents indicated that library services should be free (i.e. they regard it as the government's responsibility). 11% of the respondents stated that they were not willing to pay due to lack of income, while only 3% indicated that they were not willing to pay due to poor library services.

Figure 4.2: Reasons for unwillingness to pay according to occupation



Source: Survey Data

When the respondents who answered the above question are classified according to their occupation break-down as illustrated in Figure 4.2, the largest proportion (46%) of those who stated that library services should be free were civil servants, 31% included all those respondents who were outside the above mentioned categories (cf. 4.2.3), 15% were teachers, while 1 (8%) was a farmer. Out of the respondents who stated that they were not willing to pay due to lack of income the vast majority (63%) were students. 2 (25%) civil servants also stated that they lacked income though one could assume that they meant lack of adequate income. The 2 (3%) respondents who indicated that they were not willing to pay due to poor library services were civil servants.

4.3.15 Registration Fees

(cf. Question sixteen of the questionnaire, Appendix I)

Currently, the library offers free services except for a postage fee during registration. Due to strained resources, it is difficult for branch libraries to obtain even basic stationery

such as that required for processing membership registration. The KNLS has a centralised purchasing system and most of these items are obtained from the head office in Nairobi. As such, every time new stock is required, the branch librarian has to make a written requisition to the head office or has to dispatch a member of staff to collect the stationery, which is time consuming and it further depletes the meagre resources allocated to the branch. It was therefore necessary to know the views of the respondents if the library was to charge for certain items such as application forms, identification cards, etc as a condition for registration. The vast majority (74%) of the respondents indicated that they were willing to pay for them and 26% said no. When asked to give reasons to support their answers, most of them stated that they would be able to afford to pay for them as they expected the costs to them to be minimal. They also stated that patrons would take greater care of such items since they will have used their own money to acquire them.

4.3.16 Inter-Library Loan

(cf. Question seventeen of questionnaire, Appendix I)

Taking into consideration the question regarding the users' perception of library services offered (cf. 4.2.6), the respondents were further asked to state their willingness to pay a fee to cover the costs likely to be incurred if materials were to be obtained from other libraries on their behalf. This question was designed to give an indication whether those respondents who strongly felt that the library is inadequately stocked or felt that the materials were not appropriate to their educational needs were willing to pay for this service. The vast majority (87%) respondents indicated their willingness to pay for expenses likely to be incurred if the library was to obtain items from other information sources on their behalf. The library has limited stock and the willingness of the users to pay to facilitate materials to be obtained for them from other libraries may confirm this fact.

The respondents who indicated their willingness to pay for an ILL service were further classified according to their educational level. The largest proportion 34% of these respondents were university graduates, 31% had college education, 23% had secondary

education, 8% had professional training, 3% had vocational training, while 1 (2%) respondent had 8 years of primary education.

4.3.17 Annual Subscription Fees:

(cf. Question eighteen to twenty one of questionnaire, Appendix I)

In addition to the information from respondents regarding their willingness to pay for specific library services, data was also required from them to determine how much they would be willing to pay if an annual subscription fee were to be introduced. This information is necessary given that there are a number of options available which could be adopted by a library wishing to introduce user fees. For instance, the library could either charge for specific library services or introduce an annual subscription fee. The annual fee could entitle one to all library services or having to pay for the specific services separately.

As shown in Table 4.13 the majority (57%) of the respondents said that they were only willing to pay between Ksh.1-199 if an annual fee was to be introduced. When the highest figure (i.e. Ksh. 199) in this range is taken into consideration it translates to about 3 US\$ which is a relatively small amount of money. 14% of the respondents were willing to pay between Ksh.400-599. 12% of the respondents were not certain. Those who indicated that they were willing to pay over Ksh.1000 comprised 9% (these respondents were most probably professionals or business people whose income is high), while those who were willing to pay a range of Ksh.600-799 comprised only 1%.

Table 4.13: Proposed annual fees *(74 Ksh = \$1)

Amount in *Ksh.	Frequency	Percent	Cum.
1-199	42	56.76	56.76
200-399	5	6.76	63.52
400-599	10	13.51	77.03
600-799	1	1.35	78.38
800-899	-	-	-
More than 1000	7	9.46	87.84
Don't know	10	12.16	100.00
Total	74	100.00	

Source: Survey Data

When the respondents who indicated their willingness to pay between Ksh. 1-199 were further classified according to their occupations the largest proportion (28%) were civil servants. This is interesting given that civil servants could be classified as middle income earners and one would have expected them to pay more. The others in the 1-900 group included 9 (21%) teachers, 7 (19%) students, 1 (2%) farmer, 1(2%) housewife, 1 (2%) professional, while 10 (23%) were other respondents grouped together who were outside the above categories (cf. 4.2.4).

When asked how they would prefer the fee to be paid, 68% of the respondents indicated that if an annual fee were to be introduced they would prefer to pay as a family, whereas, 32% wish to pay as individuals. There were many reasons given for the above preferences. 59% thought that it would be economical to register as a family, while 11% also believe that they would be encouraging others to read. These are pertinent factors which have to be considered in the event that user fees are to be introduced given that some users might have more than one family member using the library.

It is evident from Table 4.14 that some respondents are willing to pay as a family in order to minimise costs. Thus there is no increase in the amount respondents are willing to pay. Interestingly, the largest proportion (28%) of those who wish to pay as a family, are willing to pay between Ksh.1-199 which is the same response as given for individual payment (cf. Table 4.13) the majority of the respondents also indicated. Those who were willing to pay Ksh. 200-399 comprised 14% .12% were willing to pay more than Ksh.1,000. 8% were willing to pay 400-599. 3% were willing to pay Ksh, 600-700, while 1% were willing to pay Ksh. 800-999.

Table 4. 14: Amount respondents are willing to pay as a family *(74 Ksh = 1\$)

Amount in *Ksh.	Frequency	Percent	Cum.
1-199	21	28.38	28.38
200-399	10	13.51	41.89
400-599	6	8.11	50.00
600-799	2	2.70	52.70
800-999	1	1.35	54.05
More than 1000	9	12.16	66.21
N/A	25	33.78	100.00
Total	74	100.00	

4.3.18 Likely Impact of User Fees

(cf. Question twenty two of questionnaire, Appendix I)

One of the reasons for the creation of the public library is that individuals need free and easy access to information. Many LIS professionals and other international bodies opposing user fees have specifically indicated that by introducing fees the attainment of this ideal would be impeded.

Table 4.15: Likely impact of user fees

Likely effects	Frequency	%
Affects free flow of information	15	20.27
Reduction of library users	56	75.68
Discrimination of the poor	42	56.76
Money might be diverted for other uses	26	35.14
Overcharging to collect more money	21	28.38

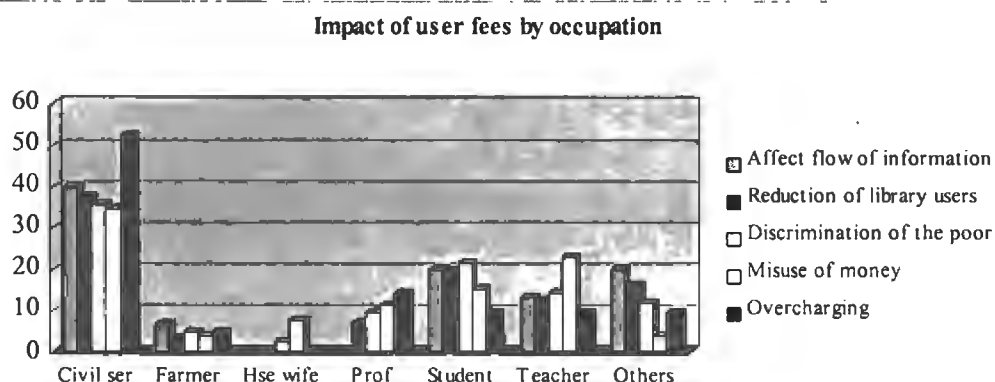
Source: Survey Data

Although 66% of the respondents indicated that were willing to pay if user fees were to be introduced (cf. 4.2.13) it is interesting to note that that 76% of the respondents also believed that introduction of user fees would lead to reduction of library users due to inability to pay. However, studies by the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial library service indicated that that this might be a temporary reaction. 57% of the respondents also believed that user fees would discriminate against the poor and needy. It is worth noting that Baringo district is an arid area with limited economic activity and this factor may have influenced the above response. 20% of the respondents said that user fees might negatively affect the free flow of information. 35% of the patrons believe that the money likely to be collected from user fees might be diverted for other usage other than improving the basic library services. 28% believe that user fees may lead to over-charging by the library to collect more money.

In order to ascertain the views of the different categories of respondents on what they thought would be the likely effects with regard to this particular issue they were classified according to their occupation break-down. As shown in Table 4.15, 20% of the respondents said that the introduction of user fees would affect the free flow of

information, while 76% of the respondents believe that user fees will lead to a reduction of library patrons due to inability to pay for services. As illustrated in Figure 4.3 amongst those who held the second view 38% were civil servants, 20% were students while 13% of the respondents were teachers. Out of the respondents (57%) who stated that user fees would lead to the discrimination of the poor, 36% were civil servants, 21% were students, 14% were teachers, 10% were professionals, 5% were farmers, while 3% were housewives.

Figure 4.3: Likely impact of user fees according to occupation



Source: Survey Data

The 26 (35%) respondents who indicated that user fees might be diverted for uses other than those originally intended included 9 (35%) civil servants, 6 (23%) teachers and 4 (15%) students.

4.3.19 Employment of Funds from User Fees

(cf. Question twenty three of questionnaire, Appendix I)

It is considered that the success of a fee paying service to some extent may depend on how the collected funds will be utilised. It is possible that the contributors may want to see the funds utilised on projects that are directly beneficial to them. Furthermore, they may also want to have direct input with regard to the utilisation of those funds. There are often fears among the general public that funds may be diverted for other purposes than

those originally intended. Thus the respondents were requested to give suggestions on how the funds which may be collected could be utilised by the library.

Table 4.16: Proposed usage of fees

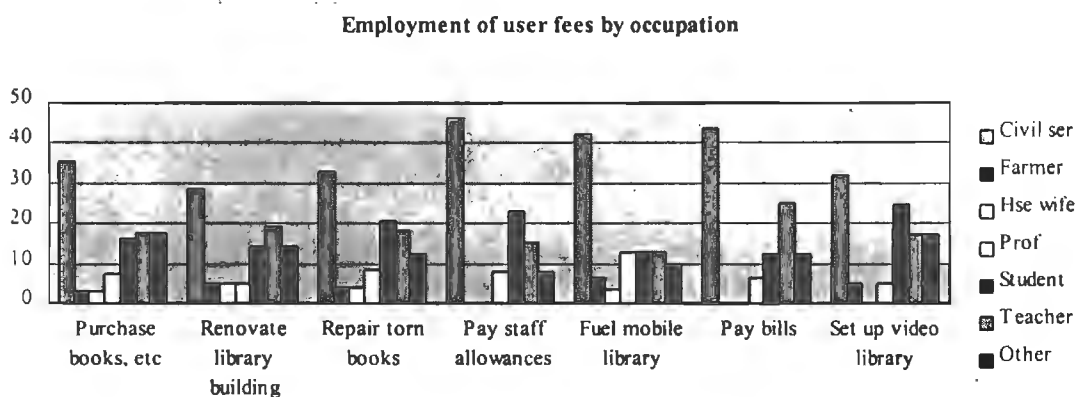
Proposal	Frequency	%
Purchase books, journals, etc.	68	91.89
Renovation of library building	21	28.38
Repair torn books	49	66.62
Pay staff allowances	13	17.57
Fuel the mobile service	31	41.89
Pay water, electricity and water bills	16	21.62
Set up video library	41	55.41

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.16 shows that by far the most favoured proposed usage of the money likely to be collected would be to purchase books, journals, etc. This proposal was indicated by 92% of the respondents while 66% indicated that the money should be used to repair books. 55% of the respondents stated that the money should be used to set up a video library. There was a strong opposition to the proposal that the funds be used for library administrative expenses. For instance, 82% of the respondents indicated that the money should not be used for payment of staff allowances, 58% said that the fee should not be used to fuel the mobile library and 78% were against the use of the funds for payment of water, electricity or telephone bills.

As illustrated in Figure 4.4 the largest proportion (35%) of the respondents who suggested that the money should be ploughed back into the library to be used for the purchase of books and other materials were civil servants, while 18% were students. The largest proportion (28%) of those who suggested that the money could be used to renovate the library building were civil servants, 19% were students while 15% were teachers. Civil servants also comprised the largest proportion (33%) of the respondents who suggested that the funds should be utilised to repair torn materials, while 18% comprised teachers, and students comprised 20%. 42% of those who indicated that the money should be utilised to fuel the mobile library were civil servants, while students, teachers, and professionals each comprised 13%. 46% of the respondents who indicated that the money could be used to pay staff allowances were civil servants.

Figure 4.4: Suggestions for utilisation of user fees by occupation



Source: Survey Data

It is evident from the above responses that users would like to see the money they are likely to pay ploughed back to projects which are of direct benefit to them. This supports the idea that the objective of the introduction of user fees should be to improve services and not to generate income.

4.3.20 Alternative Sources of Funding

(cf. Question twenty four of questionnaire, Appendix I)

It is strongly indicated in the literature that user fees should not be the only source of library revenue. In addition to user fees and traditional funding sources, the researcher wished to obtain the respondents' opinion on other alternative sources of funding. Thus, users were asked to recommend other sources the library could look into for funding. 28% said that the library could engage in commercial activities such as setting up a stationery shop, photocopy services, cafeteria, video library and Internet services. 28% suggested that KNLS could approach NGOs for possible funding and donation of reading materials since the library plays a major role in community development. 18% indicated that the KNLS is not doing enough to convince the Kenya Government of the important role it plays with regard to national development and therefore justify more funding.

4.3.21 Exemptions and Waivers

(cf. Question twenty five of questionnaire, Appendix I)

Table 4.17: Exemptions and waivers

	Frequency	Percent
Pre-school children	56	75.68
Students	46	62.16
Physically disabled	53	71.62
Pensioners	14	18.92

Source: Survey Data

After taking into consideration the various socio-economic factors which are prevalent in the research area, it was evident that not all members of the public could be expected to pay user fees if they were to be introduced by the KNLS. It was therefore necessary to know who amongst the public the respondents thought could be exempted from user fees. As can be seen in Table 4.17, 76% of the respondents recommended that pre-school children should be exempted from paying user fees, while 62% recommended that students both in lower and tertiary institutions should be exempted. A further 71% indicated that the physically disabled and the needy (including the unemployed) should be exempted. However, it is interesting to note that only 19% of the respondents believe that pensioners should be exempted.

The respondents who answered this question were further classified according to their occupation as illustrated in Table 4.17.1. The largest proportion (39%) of those who indicated that pre-school children should be exempted were civil servants, 22% were teachers while 15% of the respondents were students. The largest proportion of (40%) of those who indicated that students in lower and tertiary institutions should be exempted were civil servants. Teachers followed them at 19 % while students comprised 17%. Civil servants were also the largest proportion (31%) of those respondents who indicated that the physically disabled should be exempted while students and teachers comprised 23% respectively. The largest proportion (39%) of those who indicated that pensioners should be exempted were civil servants, 20% were teachers, 19% were students, 8% were

respondents who were grouped together (which included bankers, business people, etc.), 7% were professionals, 4% were farmers, while 2% were housewives.

Table 4. 17.1 Exemptions and waivers by occupation

	Pre-school	Students	Physically disabled	Pensioners
Civil servant	39.13	39.62	30.77	39.13
Farmer	2.17	1.89	-	3.79
House Wife	2.17	3.77	-	2.17
Professional	6.52	7.55	15.38	7.69
Student	15.22	16.98	23.08	18.68
Teacher	21.74	18.87	23.08	20.05
Others	13.04	11.32	7.69	8.49

Source: Survey Data

4.3.22 Conditions for Accepting User Fees

(cf. Question twenty six of the questionnaire, Appendix I)

Table 4.18: Pre-requisites to the introduction of user fees

	Frequency	Percent	Cum
Additional books	32	43.24	43.24
Automation	8	10.81	54.05
Loan period	5	6.76	60.81
Relevant books (new ed.)	8	10.86	81.76
Other	21	28.37	100.00
	74	100.00	

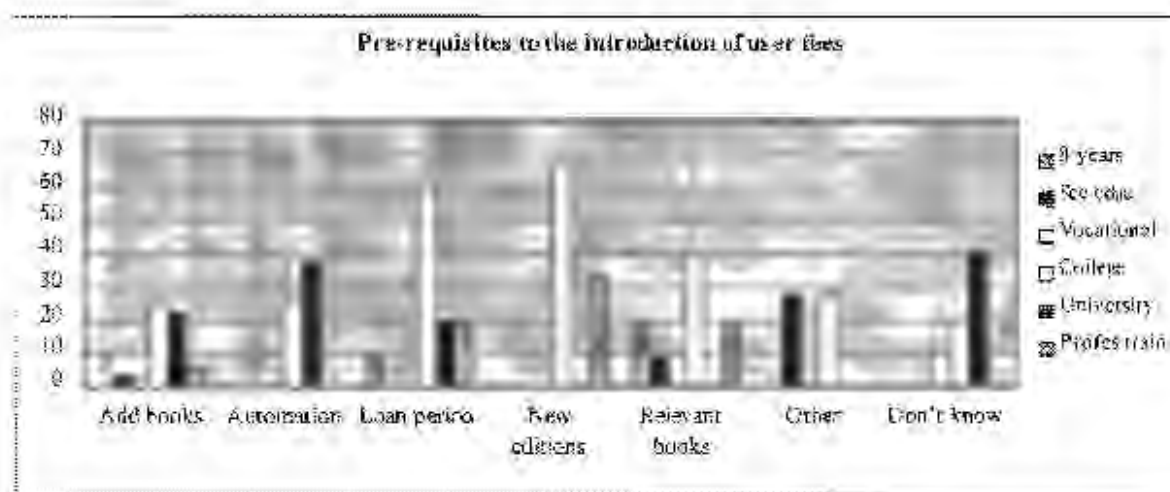
Source: Survey Data

Data was required from the respondents to establish the areas of the library service, which needed to be improved as a pre-requisite to the introduction of user fees. Although the respondents raised several issues in this regard the largest proportion (43%) indicated they would like to see more books added to the library. Out of the respondents who held the above view, 44% were civil servants, 15% were students, and the other 15% comprised of teachers. 11% of the respondents indicated their wish for the library to be automated including the introduction of Internet services. Though this was a small number, it however, provided an insight into the level of awareness of the respondents

regarding the new developments in the information field, 37% of those who identified this particular aspect were students and 25% of them were professionals (cf. 4.2.3). 11% also wanted more relevant books, while 7% stated that there is need for extension of the loan period. As indicated earlier, books are currently loaned out for two weeks. It is apparent from the above responses that the users expect to receive quality services when user fees are introduced.

When the above categories of respondents are classified according to their educational levels as illustrated by Figure 4.5, the largest proportion (44%) of those who expressed the need for additional books had attained secondary education, 25% had college education, 21% were university graduates, 6% were professionally trained, while 3% had vocational training. Amongst the respondents who wished to see the library services automated 38% had secondary education, another 38% had university education, while 25% had college training. The largest proportion (60%) of those who wished to have the loan period extended had attained college education, while university graduates and those who had vocational training comprised 20% respectively. Amongst the respondents who did not have any opinion, 40% had secondary education, while those who had university education, college training and vocational training comprised 20% each.

Figure 4.5: Pre-requisites to user fees



Source: Survey Data

SECTION 2: STAFF RESPONSES

4.4.1 Introduction

In this section, the views of the staff members regarding various aspects of services and their opinion on user fees are presented. The section is divided into two parts. The first part reports the views of staff regarding the services offered in the library. The second part reports staff responses regarding the mobile library services. As indicated earlier, cross-tabulations were not done for the staff responses.

4.4.2 Categorisation of Staff According to Age

(cf. Question one of questionnaire, Appendix II)

Table 4. 19: Age categories of staff

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cum
20-29	10	37.04	37.04
30-39	12	44.44	81.44
40-49	4	14.81	96.25
50-60	1	3.70	100.00
Total	27	100.00	

Source: survey Data

Table 4.19 shows that the largest proportion (44%) of the staff respondents were aged between 30-39 followed by those aged between 20-29 years who comprised 37% of the staff respondents. There were four (15%) staff members whose ages ranged between 40-50 years while only one (4%) respondent was above fifty years. It is apparent from the survey results that most of the staff members are relatively young and this could be attributed to the fact that the branch is only twelve years old and most of the staff were employed when the library was opened.

4.4.3 Categorisation of Staff According to Designation

(cf. Question two of the questionnaire, Appendix II)

The vast majority (81%) of the staff respondents were library assistants who are usually categorised according to their level of seniority. The lowest ranked position in this

category is that of library clerk while the highest ranking is that of senior library assistant. The majority of those in this category are holders of certificates in library studies from national polytechnics. Three (11%) support staff who had been working in the branch for a long time were also surveyed. There are only two professionally qualified librarians (diploma and degree holders) in the branch who constituted 7% of the staff respondents.

4.4.4: Staff Members' Perception of the Quality of Basic Library Services

(cf. Question four of the questionnaire, Appendix II)

Table 4.20: Ratings of basic library features by staff in percentages (%)

Features	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	V. poor
Availability of books	3.7	66.67	25.93	3.7	-
Availability of newspapers, etc.	14.81	66.67	18.52	-	-
Competence of staff	3.7	59.26	33.33	3.7	-
Attitude of staff towards public	14.81	74.07	7.41	3.70	-
Appearance of building	70.37	29.63	-	-	-
Reading environment	62.96	37.04	-	-	-
Overall quality of service	25.93	55.56	18.52	-	-

Source: Survey Data

The survey results as illustrated in Table 4.20 indicates that the staff rated the various features of the basic library services highly, and 56% of the staff respondents agree that the overall quality of the basic library services is good. However, one has to be cautious when drawing conclusion from this assessment since the staff were evaluating themselves and it is likely that they may have attempted to portray a positive picture of their branch.

4.4.5 Complaints Most Frequently Received by Staff from Users

(cf Question four of questionnaire, Appendix II)

Table 4.21: complaints received by staff from patrons

Complaint	Response	%
Insufficient books	Yes	85.19
Lack of relevant books	Yes	92.59
Limited reading space	No	81.48
Limited opening hours	No	92.59
Staff competence	No	81.48

Source: Survey Data

In an effort to further understand whether users are satisfied with the services offered by the library, staff members were asked to indicate the complaints most frequently received from users. The staff members indicated overwhelmingly that the most vociferous complaint was the lack of relevant reading material (92% response). KNLS has a centralised acquisition policy and most branches have no major role in book selection. Thus the interests of the users may have been overlooked by this policy when Kabarnet branch was opened in 1988. The above complaint may therefore be attributed to this factor. Secondly, since the library opened, the education system in Kenya has been reviewed and changed and KNLS has not been able to renew its stock to reflect these changes.

The other area of dissatisfaction according to 85% of the staff members was that the patrons often complained of insufficient books, journals, magazines, and verbal comments that were made suggests that the few available ones are limited in scope. 81% of the staff indicated that they rarely receive complaints on unavailability of reading space. The library is fairly large and has ample reading space, except for school holidays when there is an influx of school children. 92% said that users were satisfied with the library hours, and 81% stated that they had not come across complaints regarding lack of staff co-operation. However, as indicated earlier one has to be wary of this given that staff members were in a way appraising themselves.

4.4.6 Staff Perception of Users' Awareness of Services

(cf. Question five of questionnaire, Appendix II)

Table 4.22: Staff perception of users awareness of services

Service	Response	% Staff
Inter-library loan	No	77.78
Postal membership	Yes	51.85
Reference	No	96.30
Institutional membership	Yes	92.59
Mobile library service	Yes	92.59
Reservations	Yes	100.00

Source: Survey Data

It was also important to gauge the staff members' perception on the users' awareness of the services in order to draw a comparison between the responses from the two groups. As shown in Table 4.22 a large majority (78%) of the staff members believe that users are unaware of the possibility of inter-library loan services. This may be attributed to the fact that the service is not regularly offered in the branch due to costs involved and lack of money. There was divided opinion amongst the staff members as to whether the users were aware of the possibility of postal library service. 51% believed that the users were aware of the service, while 49% thought that they were not aware. The postal library service has not been offered since the inception of the branch due to limited resources and the expense to run it. Most of the staff members (96%) indicated that users were aware of the reference service, and 93% of the staff members indicated that users were aware of institutional membership. The latter response could be attributed to the fact that a substantial number of teachers are members of the library. The mobile library service, as mentioned before, is highly valued and the number of staff (93%) who believed that their patrons are aware of it reflects this. All the staff respondents indicated that the users are aware of the reservation service.

4.4.7 Awareness of Cost Sharing Policies in Kenya

(cf. Question six, seven and eight of questionnaire, Appendix II)

It was important to know whether staff members were conversant with the cost sharing policy currently in place both in the health and education sector in Kenya. Staff members were also asked to state whether it was feasible for KNLS introduce such a scheme. This information was important because staff members could not be expected to implement a scheme they don't understand or don't subscribe to.

Table 4.23: Staff awareness of cost sharing policies in Kenya

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cum
Yes	2	7.41	7.41
No	25	92.59	100.00
Total	27	100.00	

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.23 shows that 93% of the staff members are aware of the cost sharing policy currently in place both in the education and health sector in Kenya. All those who were aware of the policy indicated they have in one way or another paid for services through this scheme. The vast majority (89%) of staff members believe that it is feasible for KNLS to introduce user fees. Several reasons were given to qualify the above answer. The declining economy in Kenya and the resultant poor funding of library services was ranked high and was considered to be the most important factor. Some of the staff stated that they would rather see users pay for a quality service than to have free access to a poor service, which continues to decline every year.

4.4.8 Justification of User Fees

(cf. Question nine of questionnaire, Appendix II)

Many arguments are put forward by proponents of user fees as to why charges should be levied. Staff members were therefore specifically asked to state reasons which may be used to justify the need for user fees.

Table 4.24: Justification of user fees

Reason	Response	%
To control an influx of non-member	No	92.59
Improvement of service	Yes	81.48
To renovate building and purchase furniture	No	74.04
To fully/partially recover increased running costs	No	55.56
Recover loss or damage of library materials	Yes	62.96

Source: Survey Data

The most popular reason given for levying user fees is to improve the quality of service (81% of the staff respondents). Another popular response (63%) was that user fees are essential to cover loss or damage to library materials. This could be attributed to the fact that a substantial number of books are out of circulation because they are torn and can't be repaired due to lack of funds. 44% said that user fees would help to fully/partially recover increasing running costs. The staff respondents strongly opposed (93%) the idea that user fees should be used as a tool to control an influx of non-members to the library

and 74% of the staff members don't approve of the use of the money to renovate buildings or purchase furniture.

It is evident that staff members would like to see the money used on services that are of direct benefit to the users/contributors. This response concurs with that of the users who also wished to see the same utilisation. The most important explicit objective of user fees as indicated earlier is not to raise revenue, but to improve the quality of service. It is clear that all the staff are in accordance with what it is envisaged the a policy should achieve.

4.4.9 Fee Based Services

(cf. Question ten of questionnaire, Appendix II)

There is strong indication in the literature that if fees were to be introduced, certain services warranted the charging of fees more than others. Thus staff respondents were asked to state which services they thought users would be willing to pay for, or they thought would be appropriate to charge for, should user fees be introduced.

Table 4.25: Fee based services

Service	Response	%
Membership registration	Yes	92.59
Book loans	No	51.85
Inter-library loans	Yes	51.85
Reference service	No	74.07
Book reservation	No	55.56

Table 4.25 shows that there was overwhelming support (93%) for the notion that a fee should be charged to offset costs incurred from membership registration (i.e., printing of application forms, borrowing cards, identification cards, etc). It is important to note that the library still uses the traditional card issuing system, as the library is yet to automate. It was evident there was divided/ less clear-cut opinion on whether fees should be levied on book loans, (52% said NO) inter-library loan (52% YES) and book reservations (56% negative response). 74% of the staff would like to see the reference service provided free of charge. One could conclude that, though the staff think that user fees are feasible, they wouldn't wish to see it as an impediment to the users' to access the core library services.

4.4.10 Types of Fee and Amount to be Charged

(cf. Question eleven, twelve of questionnaire, Appendix II)

If a library were to introduce a general all-encompassing fee, it is clear that this could be approached in a number of ways. These options include; (a) one time entry fee, (b) annual fees, (c) deposit, (d) one time entry fee and deposit, and (e) annual fee and deposit. From these options, staff members were asked to identify the most suitable charging methods, which could be adopted by the library in the event that user fees are introduced. The vast majority (96%) of the staff members recommended that a combination of an annual membership fee plus a deposit to cover loss or damage to library materials would be the most suitable option. It is possible staff believe that refundable deposits may influence users to be more careful with items borrowed. If an annual fee was to be introduced the staff members recommended the following charges (presented according to the category of user).

Table 4.26: Staff proposals for annual fees *(74 Ksh = 1 \$)

	Amount in *Ksh.
Child	87.00
Student	173.00
Adult	295.00
Institution	750.00

Source: Survey Data

The average amount that staff suggest should be charged per user category per annum is as follows: *Ksh. 87.00, was suggested for children, Ksh. 173.00 was suggested for students, *Ksh. 295.00 was suggested for adults, while the average amount that was suggested for institutional members is *Ksh.750.00. It is apparent from the above suggestions that though the staff believe that it is feasible to introduce user fees they are proposing very small amounts. Follow up interviews indicated that the staff thought that a limited fee was all that could be reasonably charged so that users are not discouraged especially at the initial stages of the implementation of a user fee policy. It is evident also that to some extent the above figures fall within the ranges which the users had indicated they were willing to pay.

4.4.11 Timing of User Fees

(cf. Question thirteen and fourteen of questionnaire, Appendix II)

If fees were to be introduced 85% of the staff recommend that the fee should be charged at the beginning of each year, while 15% preferred a staggered time frame to be adopted. When asked to give reasons to support the above, 65% of the staff indicated that it would be economical to renew membership once per year since it will reduce administrative costs, especially staff time. A staggered time frame would necessitate permanent staff to process membership throughout the year. They also indicated that if fees were to be collected at the beginning of the year it will enable the library to plan and utilise the money more effectively. Charging fees at the beginning of the year may only be feasible for registered library members. However, some form of staggered time frame has to be adopted for registration of new library members since one can't expect all potential members to register at the beginning of the year. New members will also expect to renew their membership after expiry of one year from the date of registration.

4.4.12 Impact of User Fees

(cf. Question fifteen of the questionnaire, Appendix II)

As indicated earlier the likely impact of user fees requires due consideration before user fees can be introduced. Thus the staff respondents were also asked to give their views with regard to this.

Table 4.27: Likely impact of user fees

Reason	Yes (%)	No (%)
Affect free flow of information	55.56	44.44
Reduction of library users	85.19	14.81
Lead to discrimination of the poor and needy	77.78	22.22
Produces insufficient financial return	88.89	11.11
Adverse public reaction would make the proposal difficult	44.44	55.56
Money might be diverted for non-library uses	33.33	66.67
Government might reduce funding	59.26	40.74

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.27 shows that from the staff's viewpoint the greatest impact would be that the financial return would be insignificant (89% indicated this). Almost as many staff (85%) agreed that user fees could have a negative effect on users, followed by 78% who feel that it would discriminate against the poor and the needy and that borrowers who might be discouraged from using the library will tend to be those with the greatest need (for example the young and the unemployed). A concern raised by 59% of the staff was that the government might reduce funding with the hope that the library can collect adequate funds to run some of its services. Another concern of 56% of the staff members was that user fees could impede the free flow of information. It is interesting to note that about two thirds of the staff members don't think that funds collected from users might be diverted for non-library uses, and 56% of the staff don't think that negative public reaction would make the proposal difficult to implement.

4.4.13 Income Generating Activities

(cf. Question sixteen of the questionnaire, Appendix II)

In order for the KNLS to expand its financial base there may be a need to look beyond user fees to identify other supplementary sources of funding. With this regard, staff members were asked to identify activities which the library could engage in to generate additional income.

Table 4.28: Income generating activities

Activity	Yes (%)	No (%)
Desktop publishing	44.44	55.56
Stationery shops	85.19	14.81
Cafeteria	77.78	22.22
Internet services	66.67	33.33
Photocopying services	92.59	7.41
Binding services	77.78	22.22
Professional services	81.48	18.52
Letting of halls	76.92	23.08
Letting of study carrels	55.56	44.44

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.28 shows that 93% suggested installing a photocopier to generate income. The overwhelming support for this proposal could be attributed to the fact the library is situated far from the central business district and users usually encounter problems when

they need to photocopy items in the library. Another popular proposal was the need to set up a stationery shop with 85% of the staff indicating this, while 81% proposed that the library could offer professional services at a fee. These include organising seminars or short courses for school or teacher librarians. Most teacher librarians manage school libraries without having any library training. The library could also help institutions to set up libraries at a fee. The Kabarnet District Library has in the past assisted some institutions to set up libraries, this is done free of charge. 78% of the respondents stated that there is a need to set up a cafeteria to serve both the users and staff. 78% of the staff also felt that there is a need to set up a bindery unit for use by the library, which also could be made available for commercial purposes. 77% of the staff members stated that the conference hall should be made available for hire. The hall is ideal for hosting conferences, exhibitions, parties, etc. Though KNLS has not embraced library technology it was encouraging that 67% of the staff think that it would be feasible for KNLS to offer an Internet service. This could be a viable project given that there are no Internet services within Kabarnet Municipality. 56% of the staff proposed that study carrels could be provided and let at a fee. 55% of the staff don't think that it is viable to start desk-top publishing in the branch.

4.4.14 Organisations and Individuals Likely to Provide Assistance

(cf. Question seventeen of the questionnaire, Appendix II)

Table 4.29: Organisations and individuals to be approached for assistance

Organisation or individual	Yes (%)	No (%)
Prominent individuals and families	55.56	44.44
Charitable organisations, (e.g. lions club)	55.56	44.44
Local businesses	55.56	44.44
Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)	92.59	7.41
Municipal council	44.44	55.56
County council	44.44	55.56
Local banks	14.81	85.19

Source: Survey Data

A source of income for public libraries that especially the western world has benefited from is sponsorship from individuals and organisations. This support comes in the form of gifts, endowments, etc. Staff members were, therefore, asked to suggest individuals

and bodies, which could be approached by the library for assistance. By far most of the staff (93%) thought that local NGO's were well placed to help fund some of the library activities. Several of the staff commented that the library plays a major role in community development, and since this is also the objective of most NGO's, partnership in areas of common interest would be feasible. 56% of the respondents indicated that the library could approach prominent personalities within the district in order to set up a 'friends of the library' society which could assist to promote the library and also help in fund-raising activities. Likewise, 56% of the staff indicated that charitable organisations could also be approached for assistance and 56% stated that local businesses could be approached for help.

Local banks are not known to be generous with donations since most of them are driven by profit motive and this sentiment would appear to be shared by 85% of the respondents who believed that banks would not offer substantial help. They further elaborated that if banks were to offer assistance it may be with some strings attached. 56% of the staff respondents' didn't think local authorities could play any major role in the provision of library services since they are also strapped for cash. This was a fact, which was confirmed by the town clerk.

4.4.15 Proposal for Employment of Funds from User Fees

(cf. Question eighteen of the questionnaire, Appendix II)

KNLS has a centralised accounting system whereby all financial transactions are done in the head office in Nairobi. Each branch librarian is given a monthly allocation, which is reimbursed after submitting returns to the head office. All revenue collected by the branches is submitted to the head office in Nairobi. Some of the staff questioned as to why money collected by the branch is not returned back to be used to purchase books or other items. The staff respondents gave several suggestions on how the funds could be utilised.

Table 4.30: Utilisation of funds

Phenomena	Yes (%)	No (%)
Deposit into boards' account	25.93	74.04
Use to purchase books, etc.	77.78	22.22
Repair of books	66.67	33.33
Fuelling the mobile	51.85	48.15
Pay electricity, telephone and water bills	37.04	62.96
Pay staff allowances	85.19	14.81
Initiate new projects (e.g. video library)	77.78	22.22

Source: Survey Data

Table 4.30 shows that that the largest proportion (85%) of the staff would like to see that in addition to other applications the funds also be used to pay their allowances. This is interesting given that 82% of the users disagreed with them. 78% of the staff members would further like to see the funds likely to be reinvested in the library for purchase of new books. Equally, 78% would like to see the funds used for initiating new projects in the library (for instance; video library, Internet, etc.). Many books are currently out of circulation because they are torn and 67% of the staff respondents would like the revenue to be used to repair books. 52% wanted to utilise the funds to fuel the mobile library.

74% of the staff respondents rejected the suggestion that the revenue could be deposited into the board's account in the head office. It is likely that the reasons, which were stated above, may have influenced their suggestion. 63% of the respondents rejected the idea of using the revenue to pay for electricity, telephone or water bills.

4.4.16 Exemptions and Waivers

(cf. Question nineteen of the questionnaire, Appendix II)

Another important issue which has to be addressed before user fees can be considered, is the exemption of users who may not be able to pay. This is important because some users may be denied services because they can't afford to pay. With this in mind, members of staff were asked to indicate the various groups in society who they would like to see exempted from payment of user fees. It is evident from Table 4.22 that the staff would like to exempt several groups.

Table 4.31: Exemptions and waivers

User category	Yes (%)	No (%)
Students	25.93	74.07
Unemployed	37.04	62.96
Pensioners	14.81	85.19
The needy	70.37	29.63
Physically disabled persons	81.48	18.52

Source: Survey Data

From the above responses it is evident that the staff considered that the following groups would be the most likely affected if user fees were to be introduced: the physically disabled (81%) and the needy (70%). It is interesting to note that the staff respondents don't think that students, the unemployed or pensioners should be exempted. However, this should not be misconstrued to mean that staff members are proposing that students should pay. Many of the staff argued that students should not be exempted since it is their parents or guardians who would pay the fees. However, this argument is subject to debate. As indicated earlier, very few pensioners use the library and any income from them would be negligible. This can be attested by the fact that there was no respondent over 55 years, which is the retirement age in Kenya. The respondents may have deliberately excluded pensioners from exemption having this notion in mind.

There was no clear reason why the staff were not sympathetic towards the unemployed. However, given that the majority of the unemployed are youths who have recently finished school one could assume that the staff thought that most of them youths would eventually be employed. On the other hand, there is no mechanism to verify the employment status of individuals and thus it would be very difficult for the library to identify those who are unemployed and some people might conceal their status in order to take advantage of the exemption to avoid paying fees.

SECTION 3: MOBILE LIBRARY: STAFF RESPONSES

4.4.1.1 Introduction

Apart from the interviews conducted in schools served by the mobile library, the staff questionnaire had a section that dealt exclusively with issues relating to the mobile library. The staff responses are given below, while the responses from interviews conducted in the institutions served by the mobile library will be analysed separately in section 4.4.1. However, the results from the two groups will be correlated in section 5.3

4.4.1.2 Objectives of the Mobile Library

(cf. Question twenty and twenty one of the questionnaire, Appendix II)

As indicated above, the mobile library is targeted at secondary schools. This was occasioned by inadequate stock due to poor library funding of library services in Kenya. Thus when the staff were asked to indicate whether the mobile library is achieving its objectives 56% responded positively while 44% were ambivalent. The vast majority the staff were of the opinion that despite its limitations the mobile library was offering an invaluable service to the schools in the district which have no access to information services.

4.4.1.3 Viability of the Mobile library Service

(cf. Question twenty two, twenty three and twenty four of the questionnaire, Appendix II)

Table 4.21: Options for mobile library

Proposal	Yes (%)	No %
Discontinue the service	20.00	80.00
Reduce routes	20.00	80.00
Charge user fees	70.37	29.63
Purchases a smaller van	40.00	60.00

Source: Survey Data

When the staff members were further asked to state if it was economical to run the mobile library service 70% of the staff members indicated that it was too expensive. In reality, a substantial portion of the library's budget goes towards running the mobile at the expense of other library services.

Those who believe that the mobile is uneconomical were asked to provide options to counter the problem. Table 4.21 shows that almost all (80%) of the staff were against discontinuing the service or reducing routes (80%), or purchasing a smaller van (60%). A large proportion of the staff members (70%) believe that the best option to rejuvenate the mobile service would be the introduction user fees.

4.4.1.4 Who Should Pay?

(cf. Question twenty five and twenty six of the questionnaire, Appendix II)

An important issue, should KNLS require a fee for the mobile service, would be who should be charged, the institution, the students or both?

Table 4.22: Staff proposals on who should pay

Category of user	Yes (%)	No %
Students	14.81	85.19
Institution	51.85	48.15
Both	37.04	62.96

Source: Survey Data

It is evident from Table 4.22 that some staff gave more than one answer. Most staff (85%) believe feel that students should not be the only source of revenue, 63% were of the opinion that the cost should not be shared between the students and the institution, while 52% were of the opinion that the institution should pay. One of the proposals put forward was that the institution could organise to pay on behalf of the students and then devise its own ways to recover the money from the students, either directly or otherwise.

SECTION 4: MOBILE LIBRARY: INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES

4.5.1 Introduction

This section presents the results of the interviews, which were conducted in schools served by the mobile library. As indicated earlier, it was not possible to interview students since most of them were using the mobile library for the first time and were unable to provide comprehensive information. The reason for this is that due to limited stock only students in their final year are allowed to use the mobile library. Thus all the students who were using the mobile library the previous year had finished their studies at the end of 1999. It should also be remembered that the mobile library only serves schools and not the general public. Thus the data presented in this section were those obtained either from head teachers, teacher librarians or school librarians.

4.5.2 Availability of School Libraries

(cf. Question one of interview schedule, Appendix III)

In order to determine the importance of the mobile service to schools it served, it was necessary to know whether these schools had a functional library and trained library staff. Out the 14 schools, which were visited it was found that only 3 (21%) had libraries. However, a closer look at these libraries shows that none of them fit a conventional description of a library. They were basically classrooms, which had been turned into reading rooms with a few bookshelves along the wall and a few reading desks. However, all three schools with libraries had trained library assistants. Another, 7 schools (50%) indicated that they had a bookstore that was run either by students or teacher librarians. Four (29%) schools did not have a library or a bookstore. The practice in most of the schools, which did not have a library, was to issue students with class texts at the beginning of each term. The students depended entirely on these books for their class work and general reading. Some of the books are bought by the school but the bulk is bought through money accrued from an annual levy raised from each student.

4.5.3 Contribution of Mobile Services to Schools

(cf. Question two of interview schedule, Appendix III)

The majority (71%) of the respondents indicated that, the mobile library has contributed immensely to the success of their schools since most of them don't have functional libraries, while 29% had no opinion or were non-committal. Even where there was a library in place, the mobile service enhanced and widened the access to information. They stated that the mobile library service had assisted both the students and staff. They said the mobile service plays a major supplementary role and has enabled both students and teachers to access a wide variety of materials that are not available in their schools. Most of the teachers said that the books in the school are curriculum based and designed for class use. During the interviews it was learnt that a number of the teachers were pursuing private studies through correspondence and the mobile service has further also enabled some of them to access books relevant to their studies. The service has thus saved some of the teachers both money and time since they were no longer compelled either to purchase their own books or to travel far to visit libraries based in major institutions.

4.5.4 Relevance of Material to School Curriculum

(cf. Question three of the interview schedule, Appendix III)

Though most of the schools said the mobile library plays an important supplementary role, 79% of the respondents indicated that most of the material provided was not entirely relevant to the school curriculum. They indicated that most of the material was good for general reading but not designed specifically for classroom use. Most of the respondents indicated that they would prefer more curriculum-based material which could enable the students to pass their exams. It is important to note that when the mobile library was inaugurated it was not exclusively tailored for school use. It had been envisaged to serve the public at large, but due to limited resources a decision was made to limit the service to schools only. Material was therefore originally acquired with this broader readership in mind.

4.5.5 Frequency of Visits to Schools

(cf. Question four of the interview schedule, Appendix III)

The mobile library is scheduled to visit each school every fortnight, however, due to limited funds and mechanical break-downs, which are often experienced, it is not possible to follow this schedule. Cases have been reported where the mobile library has visited a school only once per term. When asked whether the mobile library has been able to visit their schools every fortnight, 79% of the schools indicated that the visits have been very irregular (i.e. no guarantee for visits every two weeks) while 21% had no opinion since they were new in their schools and were thus not familiar with the mobile library service. It is interesting to note that some of the respondents indicated that the delay in visiting schools gives the students sufficient time to read the books they have borrowed.

Most of these respondents complained that the irregular schedule has on many occasions interfered with their school programs because they are compelled to reschedule their programs every time the mobile library visited them. 71% of these institutions were of the opinion that the service would be more effective if the number of visits were increased. Some of the schools felt disadvantaged since most of the good books are borrowed before the mobile reaches them. The mobile follows a defined route, which gives an advantage to the schools which are visited first. They recommended that a circular timetable should be designed to ensure fairness to all.

4.5.6 Membership Registration

(cf. Question five of the interview schedule, Appendix III)

As indicated earlier, due to restricted resources the mobile library service is limited to final year students who are preparing for the final school examinations. However, most of the respondents were opposed to this arrangement. They stated that the students in their final year were busy preparing for examinations and as such may not have time for general reading. They were of the opinion that the lower classes stood to benefit most if the service was extended to them. They stated that membership should not be restrictive, and that all of those who wished to use the library should be accorded the opportunity.

4.5.7 User Fees

(cf. Question six of interview schedule, Appendix III)

Taking the above factors into consideration, the respondents were asked to state their views if user fees were to be introduced by KNLS to facilitate the provision of services. The majority (72%) of the respondents had no objection to user fees but certain conditions (stated below) regarding the service had to be met before they would consider participating in the scheme. 14% of the respondents said that they would not support the idea of user fees while another 14% were non-committal. Those who were willing to pay acknowledged that the service could be expensive to run and thought that fees may be necessary to supplement the library funding. However, as stated above, they required some pertinent questions to be answered before the introduction of user fees is considered, that is:

- Who is to pay? The institution or the students?
- Amount to be paid?
- What will the criteria for payment be taking into consideration the fact that some schools are well endowed and some have small student populations?
- What assurances will be given that the service will improve?
- What were the reasons for proposing the introduction of user fees?

They further required assurances that the following conditions will be met:

- The relevant and reasonable needs of the users will be addressed,
- That regular visits will be made,
- That current editions and also curriculum-based material will be made available, and
- Closer co-operation between the KNLS and schools be promoted, e.g. when designing the mobile library schedule

4.5.7 Who is to Pay?

(cf. Question seven and eight of the interview schedule, Appendix III)

One of the questions that arose during the study, was who should pay, the institution or the students? The majority (58%) of the respondents proposed that an arrangement could be made whereby the school pays on behalf of the students. The schools in turn, recoup the fees from some other sources. 21% of the respondents were of the opinion that both

the students and the institution should pay, while 21% of the respondents proposed that this decision should be left to the students since they know their financial capability. Apart from the conditions, which were reported earlier on, those institutions that were willing to pay stated that the following factors would have to be taken into consideration if user fees were to be introduced:

- The financial capability of a school,
- Fees should be negotiable and not based on standard rates, and
- The total student enrolment per school should be considered

Due to the above factors it was not possible for most respondents to determine the amount their institutions would be able or willing to pay. However, they stated that the same factors could be used as parameters in determining how much they could pay.

4.5.8 Possible Reaction from Parents

(cf. Question nine of the interview schedule, Appendix III)

The majority of the respondents indicated that most of the students come from poor households and they had difficulty in paying school fees. The other dilemma is that a portion school fees is used to purchase textbooks. Therefore, 85% of the respondents thought that it would be unfair and too much of a financial burden to require parents to pay an additional book levy in the form of library fees. They were convinced that strong opposition against the notion of a library fee would be encountered from parents and it would be interpreted as double payment of book levies.

SECTION 5: INTERVIEWS WITH LOCAL NGO CO-ORDINATORS

4.6.1 Introduction

Many international agencies are currently channelling development funds through NGOs. It would appear, however, that NGOs in Kenya are unconvinced of the need to provide information services, though they have the potential to assist, especially in the provision of community information services. In order to determine whether this was in fact true

the researcher interviewed two co-ordinators of the main NGO's based in the Baringo district. There are two major NGOs operating in Baringo district, viz.: World Vision and the Christian Children's Fund (CCF). The World Vision is involved in community development and it helps in the provision of clean water, health services, agricultural development, and social services while the CCF is very clearly involved with aid to children. The CCF deals primarily with family development and it deals with individuals rather than the community at large. It sponsors children from poor families to pursue their education.

4.6.2 Local Programmes

Despite the differences in their priorities, both agencies have a book development component in their program for schools within their area of operations. In the past, both organisations donated books to primary schools, but this project was suspended because schools could not effectively manage the books donated to them, and there was also a conflict of interests. Schools were mostly interested in curriculum-based books since the education system in Kenya is examinations oriented, on the other hand, the NGOs were interested in materials which could promote lifelong learning.

Following an impact assessment study done by these organisations, it was found that most of the books had disappeared from the schools and that proper records were not kept, neither was there adequate monitoring of the items that were issued. The problem was compounded because the schools which benefited from the scheme did not have a library and the teachers had no library skills. Apart from the disappearance of books, it also became expensive for these agencies to manage the project since they had to purchase books each year to replace the old ones and also because of the ever-changing curriculum in Kenyan schools. The project was suspended until an effective monitoring system is put in place by the beneficiaries.

4.6.3 Possible Areas of Co-operation

During the interview, the two NGO co-ordinators were informed about the objectives of KNLS, the role it plays in the provision of library services, and the different programs in

place to facilitate the provision of services. They agreed that there was a need to explore possible areas where they could assist KNLS in the provision of library services. They also agreed that KNLS would be in a better position to manage the books they had donated in the past and might in future donate to schools if the KNLS managed this scheme. They were particularly interested in the in the 'book box' project that was recently introduced in the Karatina Community Library. The 'book box' is a box specially designed to contain up to two hundred books and which is delivered by the library to schools using bicycles or motorbikes. The boxes are collected s after one month and replaced with different boxes collected from other schools participating in the project. The system ensures an equitable distribution of books, as at the end of every year most of the books will have circulated amongst the participating schools.

The two respondents concurred that the project would be economical to them and it could also ensure equitable distribution of books because it enables a school to get a variety of books. Taking all the above factors into consideration they agreed that there was urgent need for dialogue with KNLS to map out modalities which could be used to introduce a scheme such as outlined above. However, they warned that they could not guarantee that any partnership with the KNLS could last indefinitely. They stated that all their projects are subject to availability of funds and their tenure in the district.

SECTION 6: INTERVIEW WITH PRIMARY SCHOOL HEAD TEACHERS

4.7.1 Introduction

As indicated in section 3.4.4 the researcher decided not to interview students due to various reasons. Following a pre-test of the questionnaire it was discovered that most of the students couldn't give comprehensive information. This could be attributed to the low standard of education within the study the area. Subsequently, the researcher decided to restrict the age limit of the survey to those respondents who were above 15 years. Most primary school children were thus excluded from the questionnaire survey. To compensate for this missing data the researcher thus conducted interviews in all 5 primary schools within the municipality with the head teachers.

4.7.2 Availability of School Libraries

None of the five schools visited had a library, instead they had cupboards in each class, which are used for keeping books for class use. The government no longer supplies books, and each student is required to purchase his/her own textbooks. According to the teachers the library has been of great help especially to pupils from poor families who are unable to purchase books and who also lack an appropriate/adequate reading environment. The respondents, however, were of the opinion that the materials in the library should be more relevant to the pupil's needs. According to them, the students need books which can assist them to do their assignments and also to prepare for national examinations. They questioned the rationale behind the purchase of western storybooks such as 'Topsy and Tim' when it was evident that they were of little relevance to rural students in Africa.

4.7.3 Impact of User Fees

According to the respondents, user fees would have a negative affect on the students, especially those from poor families. They were convinced that these students would be compelled to withdraw from the library leaving its use to the privileged student's whose parents are also able to purchase books for them. They stated that the priority should be to encourage students not only to read for examination purposes, but also to develop an interest in life long reading. Accordingly, user fees would hamper this cause. The respondents proposed that the library should look for alternative means to raise additional funds in order to avoid user fees. For instance, they proposed that KNLS could approach Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), such as the World Vision and Christian Children's Fund (CCF), which have been donating books to schools for assistance.

SECTION 7: INTERVIEW RESULTS: KABARNET TOWN CLERK

4.8.1 Introduction

Kenya has a centralised government and local authorities play a very limited role in the provision of public services. Therefore, KNLS being a statutory board receives all its funds from the central government. Apart from the Nairobi City Council, all the other municipalities depend on the KNLS for library services. Though all the KNLS branches are based in urban municipal areas, it is interesting to note that there is limited co-operation between the KNLS and these authorities in the provision of library services, apart from the allocation of the physical site. This was evidenced when the Town Clerk was interviewed. It was clear that the Town Clerk had very little information about the functions of KNLS and the services that it offers to the residents of Kabarnet. When asked what supplementary role the council could play in the provision of library services to the local residents, the Town Clerk indicated that the authority was also strapped for cash and was also struggling to offer its services. As such, he was certain that the council could not be depended upon for any monetary contribution.

4.8.2 Areas of Possible Co-operation

The Town Clerk stated that there are areas of co-operation, which could be explored between KNLS and the municipality. The Town Clerk also stated that once in a while they receive donations from local and international agencies and KNLS could be listed among the beneficiaries. For instance, KNLS could benefit from the donations the municipality receives from its twin town in Germany. The municipality could also help to link up the library with local politicians and other prominent individuals who can help to organise fund raising activities and establishing “friends of the library” societies.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of pertinent issues that arose from the survey study reported in chapter 4 as well as from the published literature on the user fee debate. In order to bring out the issues under discussion the step-by-step format adopted in chapter four was followed to a large extent, the exception being that some of the related issues were synthesised together. In order to avoid repetition references are made to the relevant sections in the preceding chapters where appropriate. In addition to the literature the researcher also provided input to the discussion by referring to personal experience obtained from working in the KNLS for the last fourteen years.

5.2 Discussion Pertaining to Responses of Patrons and Staff in the Survey

5.2.1 User Profile

The survey results indicate that most of the respondents who use the Kabarnet District Library were relatively young and the largest proportion (45%) of them were aged between 25-34 years. It is interesting to note that no observations were made for those above 55 years which is the retirement age in Kenya, and this may give credence to the assumption that Kenyans don't read at old age. It is important to note that a decision was made to exclude children under the age of fifteen from the study since they could not give comprehensive information and their views could not impact when deciding whether to introduce user fees. The largest proportion of the respondents were male (84%), while females constituted 16% of the sample. Several factors may attest to this disparity but it is commonly assumed that women in rural Kenya have traditionally not been afforded the time by society to engage in extra-domestic and work-related activities. This precludes them from fully utilising library services.

The study has shown that the occupation group which is most strongly represented among the respondents were civil servants (35%) followed by teachers at 16%. The

considerable presence of this group can be attributed to the fact that the library is situated in an administrative town. As indicated earlier, children under 15 years were excluded from the study since they could not give comprehensive information, while students in secondary schools were also largely excluded by default because of the timing of the study during the term period when students are not allowed out of school.

The survey results indicate that the library is used mainly by well educated members of the society. It is apparent that more than half of the respondents had attained tertiary education. Those with college training comprised 30% of the respondents, while 24% had acquired university education. The presence of the large number of well educated persons in the sample could be attributed to the fact that the majority of the respondents were civil servants (35%) and teachers (16%). It is a pre-requisite to hold a degree to be appointed to many positions in the civil service. It is also mandatory to hold a degree to qualify to teach in a secondary school. Following the decentralisation of government services in the 1980s highly qualified civil servants were posted in the districts and this may further explain the presence of this category of respondents. One could also conclude that those with higher education use the library because they appreciate the importance of information and the role it plays in their lives.

Contrary to the notion that the poor members of the public are the ones who mainly use public libraries, the results of this study indicates that the largest proportion (45%) of the respondents had a monthly income ranging between Ksh.5000-15, 000 (1Ksh = 74\$). This represents the average monthly income of middle level Kenyans and correlates to some extent to Skrzewski's (1985:137) assertion that there is no indication that it is only the poorer members of the community who flock to the library and that the typical library user is seen to be from the middle class and reasonably well-off.

5.2.2 Users' Interaction with the Library Service

The KNLS has the potential to offer a variety of services, however, only a limited number of these services are available in the branches. The inability of the KNLS to offer potential services could be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the KNLS is poorly

funded and is thus compelled to scale down some of its services to reduce running costs. Secondly, it is apparent that despite limited funding the KNLS has not been aggressive in publicising the few available services.

The survey results (cf. 4.3.9) show that the majority of the patrons do not know of the few, other than basic services offered. In turn, the patrons are unable to make maximum use of them. For instance, 89% of the patrons said they were unaware of the possibility of an ILL services. This view was confirmed when 77% of the staff respondents said that the majority of the users were not aware of the possibility of this service. The major obstacle to the provision of this service is that it is expensive to run. Secondly, it is difficult to know what is available in other branches since the KNLS does not have a union catalogue in the branches. It is also important to note that the KNLS still uses manual catalogues since it is yet to automate its services. Thus the quickest way for one to know what is available in other branches entails using the phone which would be a very expensive exercise in the long run. Apart from the ILL service, the survey results show that 81% of the patrons are not aware of the possibility of a Postal Library Service. This service is designed to benefit the public who are not within reach of a library, however it is evident from the study that no efforts have been made to inform the public about the possibility of the service especially to those who don't qualify for membership in the main library.

Arising from the survey results, the researcher contends that there is a need to launch an aggressive campaign to publicise the possibility of the above services within the KNLS network. The promotion could be carried out both in the print and electronic media. The KNLS could also organise an annual 'library week' in order to promote the library services. There is also a need to start a fully-fledged information service in each branch.

As indicated earlier, the guiding principle when considering the introduction of user fees should be to improve the quantity and quality of service. Thus the researcher is convinced that patrons would not be prepared to pay for poor library services. The survey results show that 68% of the respondents rated the overall quality of the library service as 'good'

(cf. Table 4.4). However, if the ratings for specific features of the library service is examined in more detail it is evident that the bookstock was far from adequate and perceived to be irrelevant to local needs. Considering this data with feedback obtained during interviews it is evident that these deficiencies could outweigh all the other features given that the core activities in the library are centred around the provision of information. The results indicate the respondents rated the appearance of the building and the reading environment as 'excellent'. Though the researcher acknowledges that the library building is an excellent piece of architecture, and its location is ideally positioned, the aesthetics of the library building and its location may not count much in absence of adequate services if user fees were to be introduced.

There are several factors, which may have contributed to the lack of adequate and relevant bookstock as perceived by the respondents. As indicated in section 2.8.4 the Kenya National Library Services has been receiving insufficient funds for a number of years and the depleted funds are adequate for administrative and staff expenses only. As such, very few books are added to the stock each year. Since the inauguration of the Kabarnet District Library in 1988 few books have been added and the bulk of these were donations from the United Kingdom, much of which have been of little use other than filling shelf space. Many books have also been withdrawn from the library due to wear and tear. However, some of these books need minor repairs but money for purchasing binding material is hard to come by. The curriculum in Kenyan schools has also been changing frequently and the KNLS has not been able to keep up with the trends due to limited funds. Another factor, which may have contributed to the lack of relevant books, is that the KNLS has a centralised acquisition policy. As such, the branch librarians don't have an opportunity to select items suitable for their branches taking into consideration the diverse user needs in each branch. All the acquisitions are done at the head office in Nairobi and the books the books dispatched to the branches.

The problems raised above by the patrons with regard to the availability of adequate materials correlates with the response from staff members when they were asked to indicate the complaints they most often received from their patrons. 85% of the staff

members said that the major complaint they often receive was the lack of adequate and relevant books.

From the above discussion it is evident that there is a need for a commitment to improve the book stock before any thought of introducing user fees is considered. As stated by Webb (1994:3) there is no point in charging a fee for services, which have always been free without offering a counter reward, such as improved reading materials. People might look for alternative places to obtain the same material or do without it. It is also imperative for the KNLS to devise an acquisition policy which is more participative in order to place the local branch librarians and the local patrons at the core of the book selection process.

The survey results indicate that the respondents have diverse reasons for using the library (cf. 4.3.10) and that there is a marked difference when factors such as the level of education and training of the respondents are taken into consideration. For example the largest proportion (36%) of those who indicated that they were using the library for educational purposes were university graduates. Similarly, the largest proportion (42%) of those who indicated that they were using the library as a study venue were university graduates also. The results show that the majority of those who were using the library for leisure purposes had attained secondary education.

The researcher initially thought that the location (i.e. rural or urban) of the users could influence their needs. However, the results of the study did not show a clear pattern with regard to differences between the needs of the respondents from the two localities. However, this could be attributed to the fact that the majority (68%) of the respondents resided within Kabarnet Municipality and its environs while only 32% resided in rural areas.

From the literature it was clear that all the needs of the different categories of respondents have to be catered for. It is an accepted fact that public libraries do not have a homogeneous clientele, and it is thus imperative for the KNLS to take into consideration

the fact that the needs of its patrons are dynamic and varied. Thus there is need for periodic user studies. It is important to remember that since the opening of the Kabarnet library in 1988 there has been no user study conducted to establish the composition of users and their information and service needs. A further factor is that during that period many institutions have sprung up in Kabarnet and due to decentralisation of government services many qualified government employees have also been posted to the district. This has resulted in an even greater variety of users with disparate information needs.

5.2.3 User Fees: Awareness and Willingness to Pay

From the literature review it is evident that the debate on the merits and demerits of user fees has largely been between LIS professionals. However, it is not clear whether the general public share the same views with regard to user fees as expressed by librarians. The debate has further mostly been conducted in Anglo-American countries with very little input from Africa. The results of the survey underlying this study show that 38% (cf. Table 4.11) of the respondents believe that user fees would enable KNLS to supplement library services in the face of poor funding by the government, while 27% of the respondents believe that user fees would affect the poor negatively, and 6% of the respondents were of the opinion that user fees would encourage the patrons to identify themselves with the library. Although this was a small proportion of the respondents, the trend correlates with the literature. According to Meineke (1986:25) patrons of fee paying libraries would be politer to the staff and less careless with the material and equipment if they felt they had a direct part in its upkeep. It is believed that people value services that they have paid for.

However, the researcher contends that the response provided above should be evaluated taking into consideration the various local factors that may have influenced the respondents. First, as indicated in section 2.9 Kenya has a unique system of raising funds through 'harambee' (self-help) for development and this may have influenced the above response. The respondents may have felt that by paying they are not being charged but merely being asked to supplement the library service. Secondly, it is important to

remember that Kenyan is currently going through a difficult economic period and the respondents may be willing to pay user fees as a temporary measure.

When the users were asked specifically to state their willingness to pay if user fees were to be introduced the results show that 65% of the respondents are willing to. However, one has to be cautious not to draw conclusion from the above response at this stage taking into consideration the fact that the largest proportion (35%) of the respondents were civil servants who are able to pay. The researcher contends that pertinent issues raised in the study should also be considered, that is: (a) reasons for not paying (cf.4.3.14), (b) amount they are willing to pay (cf.4.3.17), and (c) the improvements of the library service they would like to see once user fees are introduced (cf. 4.3.22.). All these issues will be discussed in the relevant sections.

There were several reasons advanced by those who were not willing to pay if user fees were to be introduced (cf. 4.3.14). Most of the students indicated that they lacked the income. Although only a small proportion of the sample consisted of students due to the timing of the study and the decision to exclude children under fifteen years, it should be noted that research from other parts of Africa indicate that students form the majority of those who use public libraries (Raseroka, 1994:156). This study thus might not be fully representative of the potential user population of the KNLS. The researcher contends that the needs of those who want the service but may not be able to pay should be considered if user fees were to be introduced.

5.2.4 Improvements of Library Services Contingent on User Fee Introduction

When the users were asked to state the most important thing they would like to see improved if user fees were to be introduced, the need for more books was ranked high with 40% of the respondents indicating this need. Follow up interviews also indicated that the staff felt that there is a need to improve the bookstock. It was apparent that since the library was established in 1988 very few books have been added and these few additions have been mainly books obtained by means of donations from the UK through the Book Aid agency. Many of these books, however, are not relevant for local

information needs and 24% of the respondents indicated that there was a need for new editions and books relevant to the needs of the users. About 24% gave other diverse reasons such as the need for study carrels, more reading tables, etc. 7% wanted the library to introduce an online catalogue and Internet services while only 1% indicated the need for more competent staff. From the above responses it is evident that the users would wish to see the improvement of certain services once user fees are introduced.

5.2.5 Possible Fee Structures

The survey results indicate that if an annual fee is to be introduced several factors will have to be considered in the light of the proposals put forward by the respondents. For example, 65% of the respondents said that they wished to be registered as a family. Apart from the fact that this view will create administrative problems it also indicates that if fees should be introduced the respondents are likely to look for alternative means to save costs. Such an arrangement will definitely reduce the revenue likely to be collected from the scheme.

There are different types of fees, which have been identified by the staff respondents that can be applied if the KNLS was to introduce annual fees. These options are:

- **Multiple entry fee:** this entails that a client is charged a fee each time he/she visits the library
- **Annual fee:** this is a system whereby a client pays membership fee to cover a whole year. This fee is paid once
- **Deposit:** this is paid to the library in advance to serve as security in the event that a client fails to return library material, or damages items. The fee is refundable upon termination of membership.
- **Multiple entry fee and deposit:** which is basically a combination of the first and second alternatives.
- **Annual fee and deposit:** this is also a combination of the alternatives, whereby apart from the annual fee the client also places a deposit with the library.

Taking into consideration the administrative implications of the above options and the willingness of the respondents to pay it is evident that the best option would be to charge an annual fee and a deposit.

A decisive factor for the research was the responses that indicated how much the users were willing to pay. As illustrated in Table 4.6 the majority (57%) said that they were willing to pay an annual fee ranging between Ksh. 1-199 (74 Ksh = 1 US \$). Taking into

consideration the fact that the library has about 500 adult members (though some may be dormant) it is evident that very little revenue will be generated. Thus one can conclude that though a high proportion of the respondents are willing to pay they lack the willingness and ability to pay adequately.

The fact that user fees, if introduced at the rate suggested by the majority of the respondents, would only generate a modest revenue could have a serious impact on any fee-based strategy. This correlates with the fear, which has been expressed in the literature of the ability of libraries to collect adequate funds by means of fees. According to Webber (1990:222), it is unlikely that the majority of the information services being offered at a fee are capable of recovering all costs, if one includes staff time spent carrying out, planning and training, marketing the service and other indirect cost and overheads needed to implement and to manage the scheme.

The survey results of the study, however, show that there are potential services which can be offered for a fee, e.g. ILL, postal service, etc. (cf.4.3.9). However, many of these services were not known to most of the patrons, thus making it difficult to determine whether it is viable to charge fees for these services. When the staff respondents were asked to suggest services which can be offered at a fee only two services were identified, viz. membership registration and the ILL service. 92% of the staff indicated that there is a need to charge a levy on membership registration fees in order to offset printing cost while 74% said that a fee could be introduced for the ILL service which is not fully operational due to lack of funds.

The majority of the staff objected to the proposal to introduce user fees to cover the loan of books, reference services or book reservation (cf. 4.4.15). Although the majority of the staff believe that it is feasible to introduce user fees it is apparent that they don't agree that fees should be charged for core library services.

Although it is not the purpose of this study to detail administrative problems related to running fee based services, the researcher believes that there could be considerable

attendant problems and that there is a need to obtain better information on the costing of library services before considering charging for specific services. It became apparent from the literature survey that, currently, there is no detailed information that relate to Kenya that the KNLS could apply on how to cost specific services.

5.2.6 Alternative Sources of Funding

A number of alternatives fund generating possibilities other than direct user fees have been identified in the course of this study. One of the novel ideas proposed by both staff and patrons was the need to introduce e-mail and Internet services. During the time of the study there were no Internet services available at the Kabarnet library. Thus, apart from its use by the library patrons this service could also be made available to the general public at a fee. The researcher further believes that such a service, if used by staff for inter-system communication rather than the telephone system, will reduce high telephone bills as well as enhance communication. It was established that it is also viable to set up a stationery shop and provide a photocopy service. Given that the library is situated outside the central business district this will be an invaluable service to both staff and patrons and the general public as well.

Although the KNLS has a bindery unit based at the head office in Nairobi, this service can't cope with the demand from the branches and the logistic problems imposed by the vast distances. Thus, the majority of the staff proposed that a bindery unit could be set up in the branch to be used by the library and this could then also be made available for commercial purposes. The interviews conducted in schools indicated that the project could be viable because most of the teachers expressed an interest to utilise the facility if it is set up by the KNLS since there were no bindery services in the district.

Though the Kabarnet District Library is relatively small it has over 38 staff members and it is surmised that many of them were under-utilised. The researcher contends that there is a need to tap their talents by making their skills available to those who need professional services from the library. For instance, most of the schools in the district indicated that they wished to set up libraries but didn't have trained staff. Some of the

staff could therefore be seconded to these institutions to set up libraries or to offer professional advice at a fee. Thus there is a need for the KNLS to set up an enterprise unit to co-ordinate such activities both at the branch and national level.

The Kabarnet District Library has a functional conference hall, which is under-utilised. The hall is ideal for conferences, exhibitions, parties, etc. and the majority of the staff were of the opinion that there is a need to promote the hall so that the public and organisations within Kabarnet Municipality can be made aware of it and use it at a fee. An example could be taken from the Garrissa branch, which has managed to collect a substantial amount of money annually by subletting some of the library offices to organisations at a fee. The majority (78%) of the staff also indicated that the canteen, which is under-utilised, should be leased out to private firms to offer adequate catering services to both staff and patrons. If properly run, many man-hours that are lost because staff travel to town each day for lunch could be saved.

5.2.7 Likely Impact of User Fees

One of the major arguments raised in the literature against user charges lies in the traditional notion of freedom of access to information and a free basic service. This is certainly one of the most emotional arguments used, and has a strong appeal. The main claim of the argument is that imposing charges limits the access of those who cannot pay the fee and shifts the resources of the library to paying clients (Cartmell, 1992:30).

Opinions voiced by respondents in this study correlate with the above argument. The majority (76%) of the respondents were of the opinion that user fees would result in the reduction of library patrons though this might be a temporary measure. According to Pritts (1992:5) when such a fee was introduced in the former Transvaal Province, the immediate reaction was cancellation of library membership but librarians noticed that after a period many clients who had first resisted were returning to the service. However, the researcher contends that the negative impact of user fees cannot be underestimated. Moran (1986:23) refers to instances where user fees have been introduced where both the membership and the circulation of items declined.

The majority (56%) of the respondents were of the opinion that user fees would lead to the discrimination of the poor and needy and this also correlates with the literature. According to Harmse (1989:3) user fees result in the formation of an information elite, while those who are socially and economically under-privileged will be denied use. About 60% of the staff respondents feared that the introduction of user fees could encourage the government to further reduce its funding in the hope that the library will collect adequate funds internally.

Arising from the above arguments it is evident that if user fees were to be introduced borrowers who are most disadvantaged will tend to be those with the greatest need for information, for example the young and the unemployed. The degree of discouragement would further directly relate to the size of the charge imposed.

5.2.8 Employment of Funds

The survey results indicate that both the patrons and the staff who manage the Kabarnet District Library agree on some of the proposals regarding the use of the funds likely to be collected if user fees were to be introduced. It is evident that both respondents would wish to see the funds utilised on services that will benefit the contributors directly. Table 4.9 shows that 92% of the patrons suggested that the money should be ploughed back into the library to purchase books, journals, newspapers etc. Equally, 78% of the staff proposed the same usage. Both staff and patrons rejected the suggestion that the money could be used to pay library maintenance bills (water, electricity, telephone, etc). However, they differed on the proposal that the money could also be used to pay staff allowances. Whereas 82% of the patrons didn't support this proposal 85% of the staff respondents' would like to see such funds also partially used to pay staff allowances. The stance taken by the staff may lend credence to the fear held by many that funds might be diverted for secondary purposes not utilised for service improvement.

From the above exposition there is strong evidence to suggest that if user fees were to be introduced, patrons would like to play some role in the utilisation of the funds likely to be collected. The library will also have to demonstrate transparency and accountability in

the usage of these funds. However, the realisation of the above may be hindered by the fact that the KNLS has a centralised accounting system. As described earlier, all the funds collected in the branches are remitted to the head office in Nairobi. Thus the researcher proposes the introduction of a mechanism similar to the one in the health sector which allows the collecting centre to utilise a percentage of the funds it will collect without seeking authority from the head office. This will motivate the patrons and the staff since they will have control over the money collected in the branch.

5.2.9 Exemptions and Waivers

As indicated earlier, it is most unlikely that all patrons will be able to pay if user fees were to be introduced. Thus it is of paramount importance to consider the interests of those who are unable to pay. The results of the study indicate that the majority of the patrons are of the opinion that students should be exempted if user fees were to be paid. However, this contrasts with the view held by staff members. About 74% of the staff don't believe that students should be exempted. The argument by the staff is that it is not the students who are going to pay but their parents or guardians whose views should be sought. This is an interesting issue, which needs to be tested in any subsequent research.

The survey results indicate that 62% of the patrons propose that the needy should be exempted while most of the staff (63%) don't accept that the unemployed should be exempted. However, one has to be cautious when interpreting this view since the staff may have based their reasoning on administrative factors rather than sympathy to the unemployed. As indicated earlier, there is no agency in Kenya which documents employment records thus it will be difficult to ascertain the authenticity of those who may claim to be unemployed and the staff may have felt that others may take advantage of this exemption to avoid paying fees.

The vast majority (81%) of the patrons don't believe that pensioners should be exempted. Surprisingly, not even one respondent was above 55 years, which is the minimum retirement age in Kenya. There has been an argument for a long time that Kenyans are not avid readers especially at old age. There are two factors, which are often attributed to

this assumption. Firstly, it is argued that the Kenyan education system is examination oriented which tends to kill any incentive to read after school. Secondly, the poor economy compels most working Kenyans to engage in several income activities in addition to their professional work leaving no time for reading.

From the above evidence it is clear that the group that is most likely to be affected by user fees include students, the needy and physically disabled. It is also clear that for user fees to succeed there will be a need to identify all vulnerable groups in society that would qualify for exemption. This correlates with Cartmils' (1992:32) view that there is a need to create classes of exempted persons, for example the elderly and the unemployed.

5.3 Discussion of Responses Pertaining the Mobile Library

This section discusses the responses obtained from the library staff and the institutions served by the mobile library. The results of the two groups are reported separately in chapter 4 (cf. section 3 and 4). As indicated earlier in section 4.5.1 only teachers were surveyed during the visit to the institutions served by the mobile since the students could not give comprehensive information as they were using the mobile library for the first time.

The majority of the library staff concur that the mobile service has achieved most of its stated objectives, but they acknowledge that it is very expensive to run the service. This is true given that out of a monthly budget of Ksh. 15,000 (1 US\$ = 74 Ksh.) more than half of it goes toward running the mobile library.

The results of the interviews conducted in schools indicate that the mobile library provides an invaluable service. The respondents indicated that the mobile service has played a major role by providing supplementary books to both students and teachers. Out of the fourteen schools which were surveyed, only three had libraries and as indicated earlier, these libraries are no more than bookstores. However, there were issues raised by both staff and institutions regarding the quality of the mobile library service which require due attention if user fees were to be introduced. The major complaint raised by

most schools was that the mobile library is inadequately stocked and the few books available were outdated and not sufficiently curriculum oriented. This may be true given that since the mobile library service was inaugurated in 1998 it was not school-oriented and few books have been added due to lack of funds. Thus the KNLS has not been able to keep up with the ever-changing school curriculum. On the other hand, a large proportion of the mobile budget is used for maintaining the vehicle and paying staff allowances.

The vast majority (79%) of the respondents indicated that they were not satisfied with the number of visits they get per term. As indicated in section 4.4.5 the mobile is supposed to visit each school every fortnight. However, the Kabarnet District Library receives a monthly allocation from the head office and at times the payment is not prompt. As a result, the mobile is only operational when funds are available. Most of the schools were also not satisfied with the restriction on registration. Due to limited stock the mobile serves only the final year students. It is, however, evident that the majority of the teachers were of the opinion that the service would be more beneficial if it is extended to the lower classes since the form four students are busy preparing for their final examinations and don't have time for general reading.

Taking into consideration the above issues the majority of the staff proposed that the only way to sustain the mobile service is to introduce user fees in order to offset some of the expenses incurred by the KNLS. When this proposal was put forward to teachers in the schools served by the mobile 71% of them indicated that they had no objection to the introduction of user fees. They acknowledged that the service is expensive to run given that there are many institutions spread throughout the district. The next issue which arose out of this proposal was who should fund the service, the institution served or the students. 58% of the staff respondents proposed that the institution should pay while 87% of the teachers indicated that the schools have a moral obligation to pay for the students since they are supposed to offer library services but have failed to do so. The teachers also expressed fear that there would be resistance from the parents/guardians given that they were already paying an annual tuition fee which includes a portion for the purchase

of textbooks. They suggested that instead of subjecting parents to additional payments the school should use part of the book fund to supplement the services offered by the KNLS.

The researcher contends that there is a need to formulate a policy which could facilitate the introduction of fees in order for institutions to supplement the mobile library service. Since the inception of the mobile library its services have declined tremendously. Out of the forty schools originally served more than half of them have been withdrawn due to escalating operational costs and inadequate stock. Without sounding pessimistic there is no doubt that without alternative urgent remedial measure the mobile service may have to be grounded as the case has been in other branches. Thus fees collected could assist to fuel the mobile services.

5.4 Discussion of Responses pertaining to Co-ordinators of Local NGO's

Currently, most international funding agencies prefer to work with NGO's in Kenya due to alleged corruption and mismanagement in the public sector. However, few of these organisations are involved in the provision of library and information services. It is considered that most of these organisations are not aware or convinced about the role libraries can play in national development. The LIS professionals in Kenya are partly to blame for this lack of awareness. Unlike their colleagues in the public service sector they have not been at the forefront promoting library services. The results of the interviews conducted with two NGO's based in the Baringo District show that there are areas of common interest, which could be explored between the KNLS and the two NGO's. For instance, it was found that for over a decade the two organisations have been donating books to the tune 2 million shillings annually (1 US \$ = 74 Ksh.). However, due to logistical problems the project was suspended two years ago. The results of the study indicate that the two NGO's are convinced that the KNLS is better placed to run the project on their behalf since it has the expertise, especially in running library services. They were particularly interested in the idea of collaborating should the book box service currently in place in Karatina (cf. 1.4.1.4) and designed for primary schools be introduced in the Kabarnet/ Baringo District.

The researcher proposes that there is a need to establish a formal working relationship with these organisations. However, both organisations were quick to caution that they could not guarantee the duration of a project to be funded since it all depended on their tenure in the district and availability funds. This caution correlates well with what has been expressed in the literature. According to Bawa et al (1998:16) funding from non-governmental organisations and donor funding could be canvassed with the realisation that this means of acquiring funds is not sustainable in the long term. The researcher concurs with this view given that donors tend to support specific projects for a specified period. Such funding is not usually granted for long-term projects.

5.4 Discussion of Responses Pertaining to Primary Schools

Though the researcher made a decision not to survey school children as indicated in section 3.4.4, it was imperative to know from their teachers what the likely effects would be on the students if user fees were to be introduced. As indicated in section 3.4.4 the library offers services to all primary schools within the Kabarnet Municipality. Due to limited space and resources each school is allocated a certain time slot each week during the school term when students may visit the library to read and borrow books. However, students can visit the library to do their private studies during the weekend and vacation.

The responses from the teachers indicate that the library plays a crucial role in supplementing their teaching resources. During the survey it was found that none of the schools had a library and they were depending solely on the Kabarnet District Library. The majority of the teachers indicated that the KNLS has enabled the students to diversify their knowledge since the only books they stock are designed for class use and not for general reading. The respondents also said that if user fees were to be introduced the students from the poor households would be affected most and this problem is compounded further by the fact that the Kenya Government no longer supplies textbooks to schools. This compels parents to purchase books for their children, once again affecting poorer households the most.

Taking into consideration the high levels of poverty in the Baringo District, the researcher is convinced that library services will not be a priority item in most of the families. The problem is that libraries convey neither the sense of urgency nor necessity that characterises other public services such as education and health, which will certainly take precedence with regard to fees. Books are not considered a primary need. It is evident from the respondents that user fees would impact negatively on most students and as they form the bulk of users in most public libraries this could negate one of the primary objectives of the public library which is to encourage the development of an interest in life-long reading.

5.5 Discussion of Responses from the Kabarnet Town Clerk

The survey results indicate that the Kabarnet Municipality is not in a position to assist in the provision of library services since it is also struggling to provide basic services in the municipality due to limited funds. It was established during the interview with the Town Clerk that though they collect rates for land and other property within the municipality all the money collected is remitted to the treasury in Nairobi. Thus, as in the case with the KNLS, the authority depends on the government for its funding. The Town Clerk indicated that at times they receive assistance from international agencies and if KNLS could identify specific areas of the service that requires assistance, funding from these sources could probably be arranged. The council is also willing set up links between the KNLS and eminent personalities within the district. This will be a boost given that for a long time the KNLS has lacked the will both at the local and national level to engage in political lobbying to improve its services and to solicit increased funding.

5.6 Conclusion

The results of the study shows that although the users are willing to pay if user fees were to be introduced, the amount they are willing to pay is, however, too insignificant to have any marked effect on the provision of library services at the Kabarnet District Library. This issue will be fully discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate the feasibility of introducing user fees at the Kabarnet District Library in Kenya. The study has attempted to present various viewpoints in the literature regarding user fees in the public library setting. It has recognised that information, and access to information is of enormous economic and social value. It has also attempted to demonstrate that access to information plays a vital and central role in the development of individuals, which seems to be an inalienable right in a democratic society. The researcher further would like to point out that the trend towards commercialisation which has been discerned in the literature and in practice could leave certain sectors of the community disadvantaged. It is feared that user fees could lead to polarisation which leaves individuals with the choice to pay for services in a market society, or unable to pay due to financial incapacity to meet information charges.

It is commonly argued that the introduction of fees may deny access to information. However, it is also considered that libraries that do not charge a fee may also deny access if they are unable to afford to provide services which meet the expectations of users, especially with regard to adoption of the new technologies. The researcher further contends that the costs of administering and collecting fees may outweigh the benefits. It is apparent from the study that before a public library contemplates introducing user fees it is important to consider the implications this fee could have in relation to the objectives of the public library, that is: to provide access to information irrespective of race, creed, colour or social status. It is also important to establish whether: (a) there is willingness to pay, and to pay adequately and (b) the appropriate resources and skills required to implement it. Thus, before proceeding with a fee-based service the researcher contends there is a need also to address these issues by reviewing resources and researching the market. Only then, will the institution be in a position to start planning and implementing a fee-based scheme which is likely to be viable.

From the foregoing exposition it is apparent that there are no easy solutions to the user fee issue. The results of this study has indicated that although the public library by its very nature has a political foundation and the information it provides is increasingly valued in economic terms, the ethical aspects of charging a fee for services rendered should not be overlooked. Thus the researcher contends that the KNLS should not be in a hurry to achieve temporary gains at the expense of long-term objectives.

6.2 Principal Conclusions

In concluding this study the researcher proposes to briefly review the research questions which the study attempted to answer and to relate them to the findings that were reached by the study.

1. What is the Kenyan Government's policy on user fees in the public library sector?

The study found that at the moment there is no formal government policy in Kenya regarding user fees in the public library sector. As indicated in section 1.5 only the health, education and transport sectors are currently targeted for cost sharing. However, it is argued that for cost sharing to impact positively on overall government revenue there is a need to expand the scheme to encompass other service sectors.

2. Is the KNLS receiving a fair share of government funding?

As far as question (2) is concerned, it is apparent that the KNLS has been receiving insufficient funds from the government since the inception of the Board in 1967 and this has hampered the provision of effective services. This situation worsened following the budgetary constraints imposed on the government by the IMF in 1990. This further reduced government allocation for the provision of basic needs. However, many in the LIS profession in Kenya believe that the KNLS has not been effective in seeing that it receives its due share of available finances from the government and that it should more clearly articulate the role it plays in national development.

3. What are the users' views of the quality of current library services and staff competence?

The study shows that the overall quality of the library service was rated as 'good' and that the staff are considered to be competent. However, the users indicated specific areas of the service which need to be improved. For instance, the majority of the users indicated that there is a need to improve the quality of the stock both qualitatively and quantitatively to serve the diverse spectrum of users and local information needs. This is a condition, which the users stated that the library has to meet, if user fees are to be introduced since they expect to see a positive return on the revenue they put into the system. It was very clear that there is a need to provide materials which are more relevant to the current school curriculum.

4. Are the library users willing and able to pay for library services if user fees were to be introduced?

The issue of whether users are willing and able to pay remains unresolved. The study has shown that a large proportion (66%) of the respondents are willing to pay if user fees are to be introduced. However, when they are asked to indicate how much they were willing to pay the majority indicated very low amounts. Thus one can assume that the respondents have the will but lack the ability to pay. This issue requires further research in order to establish the relationship between willingness and ability to pay.

5. What services can be offered at a fee?

The study has shown that there are a number of services with the potential to generate varying levels of income. However, it was evident that most of the staff wouldn't wish to see user fees imposed on the core library services such as, reference services and book reservation since they would impede their usage. In addition, it was found that most of the respondents were not aware of many of the potential library services. Thus there is a need for the library to publicise the potential of the library to offer a variety of services in addition to the loan of books. Only then can a conclusive decision be made as to whether or not to charge user fees for specific services.

6. Who will pay and who will be exempted if user fees are to be introduced?

The study has shown that in the event that user fees were to be introduced all patrons will not be able to pay. Thus, there is a need to devise mechanisms to facilitate exemption for those not able to pay. The study has shown that those who will be affected adversely by user fees will be the most vulnerable groups in society.

7. What is the magnitude or level of revenue that might be collected, and whether or not it will be sufficient to improve service provision?

This question evinced to be a decisive factor in the project. When the respondents were asked to state how much they were willing to pay if user fees were to be introduced it became apparent that the money likely to be collected would be far from sufficient. The funds generated would have little impact on improving the quality of library services. Thus, taking into consideration the cost to collect fees and staff time required to implement the system it would appear to be uneconomical to manage such a scheme. In addition, the users expect the quality of services to be improved if user fees are introduced. Thus, it is apparent that introducing user fees would be self-defeating since the library is already poorly funded and the patrons are only willing to pay very low amounts. As indicated in section 4.4.1.9, the procedure which is currently in place regarding any revenue collected by the branch, is that it has to be remitted to the head office in Nairobi. Thus the Kabarnet library might not have any opportunity to utilise the funds it is likely to collect from user fees until the above policy is reviewed or rescinded.

8. What will the impact be of fees on membership and utilisation of the library?

The study has shown that user fees could impact negatively on membership and the utilisation of the library since it could lead to a reduction of library membership by discriminating against the poor and the needy. The study has also shown that the introduction of user fees might provide the government with an opportunity to reduce funding with the hope that the library can itself collect adequate funds. However, the study has shown that there is a need to introduce a levy on services that have direct financial implications on the library such as the postal, mobile, and inter-library loan services.

9. Apart from user fees what other alternative sources of revenue could be introduced?

The study has attempted to identify several alternative revenue sources other than user fees, which may be adopted by the library. These were reported in section 4.4.12 and were mainly concerned with the introduction of viable income generating activities, such as the setting up of a bindery unit, a stationery shop, a photocopy service, e-mail and Internet service, the letting of the library conference hall, the setting up of a video library, etc. Many of these services could be used to the benefit of the library and could also be made available for commercial purposes.

10. What supplementary role can individuals, local NGOs, and other aid agencies play in the provision of library services?

The study has shown that there are several areas of the library service which can be offered in partnership with the local NGO's for instance, the provision of a book box service. However, it was apparent that such co-operation might not be on a long-term basis given that the support from the NGO's is subject to availability of funds and their tenure in the district. The results show that there are very few individuals who are in a position in the district to assist in the provision of library services and the local authority is also poorly funded. As such, it is unable to offer assistance other than linking the library with other agencies that may be in a position to assist.

11. What is the future role of the mobile library services and specifically the funding implication? and

12. What are the views of the staff and schools served by the mobile library regarding its effectiveness?

It is apparent that the mobile library was offering an invaluable service to schools within the district. However, it became evident that the Kabarnet District Library is already straining to offer this service since it is expensive to run and the service may come to a halt if supplementary funds are not obtained. The study shows that most schools are able and willing to pay for the service.

6.3.1.3 Mobile Library Service

The researcher recommends that:

The KNLS Board should consider introducing a levy for all institutions served by the mobile library in order to sustain the service which although highly valued and essential, has proved very expensive and in need of urgent remedial measures. The survey results indicated that most institutions were in a position to supplement the running of the mobile library without passing costs on to students.

6.3.2 Recommendations for Alternatives to User Fees

6.3.2.1 Bindery Unit

The researcher recommends that:

The KNLS board should consider acquiring equipment for setting up a bindery unit in the branch for library use and also make it available for commercial use. Apart from earning revenue for the Board, the unit will also go a long way to ease the problems currently experienced by the branch in repairing worn out books.

6.3.2.2 Stationery Shop

The researcher recommends that:

The KNLS board should consider establishing a stationery shop in the branch to offer services to both library users and the general public. The stock could include pens, notepads and exercise books, binding tapes, library materials etc. The stationery shop could also offer the following services at a fee:

- Telephone bureau, fax and secretarial services,
- Internet and e-mail services, and
- Photocopy services.

6.4.2 Local Authority

The researcher recommends that:

The KNLS should seek a better understanding with local authorities in the provision of library services. Although the results indicate that most local authorities are cash-strapped there are areas in which the two bodies could collaborate to enhance library services. This was demonstrated by the role played by the Naivasha Town Council during the opening of the Naivasha community library when it provided both financial and moral support.

6.5. Marketing Strategies

In order for the above recommendations to be realised the researcher contends that there is need to market the library service. Thus the researcher recommends several methods which the KNLS Board could consider to use to market the library services, viz.:

- Using both electronic and print media to publicise library programs
- Conducting market segment studies,
- Conducting a National Library Week, and
- Public lectures, etc.

6.6 Appropriation of Locally Generated Funds

The researcher recommends that there is a need to review the KNLS policy which requires that all the revenue collected in the branch should be deposited in the Boards' account in Nairobi. The branch librarians should be given the opportunity to utilise the revenue it collects to replace lost items or to purchase new ones. This will motivate the staff since they will feel they are in control of the funds they collected.

6.7 Recommendation for Further Investigation

The results for this study have raised more questions than answers. Thus the researcher hopes that the issues raised will provide adequate stimulus for further research which will cover the entire KNLS network. It is also hoped that the proposed research will be conducted for a longer period to avoid the limitations experienced in this study with regard to the timing of the study (cf.1.6). Arising from the results of the study and the literature survey (particularly the report by Bawa et al (1998:32) on the financial

constraints faced by the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Library service) the researcher poses the following questions as pointers to further research: If fees were to be introduced;

- Should access to library facilities and resources be free; that is should fees only be imposed for lending privileges?
- Should all people who come into the library be charged a nominal fee? Many students use the space in the library but use few library books. Should they not be charged for the facilities they use?
- Should all members of the public pay a flat rate? Would a family of six be expected to pay individually?
- Should the local authorities be compelled to supplement the services that the KNLS provides?
- The KNLS would need to establish procedures for the collection and receipt of payments. What then would the cost be to the library, in terms of finances and professional librarians' time?
- Would the public be entitled to demand the service and resources they specifically require? Presently purchases of public library resources are not specifically client driven but mass exposure driven, in other words resources are purchased that will be used by as many people as possible.
- What time of the year would the fees to be collected? Some sort of staggered time frame to collect fees would have to be introduced or else librarians would have to literally close their libraries for a lengthy period in order to re-register members and collect fees. If registration and fee payment is staggered, who begins paying first?
- In the case of students, who should pay for library fees, the institution or parents/guardians? What are the views of their parents/guardians with regard to the overall library service?

From this study it is clear that cost sharing has several advantages, however, it must be noted that the revenue likely to be generated and the cost of implementation may not be justified. The study has further shown that cost sharing will impact negatively on the poor who are in dire need of the services. Thus the researcher proposes that alternatives to user fees should be investigated to ensure equitable use of the library service by the public, together with the much needed revenue injection.

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6.3 Recommendations

The results from the analysis of the data collected during the study does not give the researcher the confidence to recommend the introduction of user fees at the Kabarnet District Library except for services which have direct financial implications to the library. These include: (a) inter-library loan service, (b) postal library service, and (c) the mobile library service. The researcher also recommends that the alternatives to direct user fees, which were identified in section 5.2.8 could be implemented to supplement the library's revenue. These include the introduction of (a) various income generating activities, and (b) partnerships with NGO's and/or other local authorities.

In the following sections a more detailed exposition will be given with regard to the cost sharing recommendations and alternative revenue sources.

6.3.1 Recommendations for Cost Sharing

6.3.1.1 Interlibrary Loan

The researcher recommends that:

The KNLS Board should consider introducing a fee to cover expenses likely to be incurred by the library while acquiring information and documents from other sources on behalf of the library patrons. The charge is necessary to revitalise the service, which has been virtually dormant for a long time due to escalating costs. Most libraries in other parts of the world accept it as a norm to charge such fees.

6.3.1.2 Postal Library Service

The researcher recommends that:

The KNLS Board should revitalise the service and seek special rates from the postal authorities to minimise charges for sending or receiving books likely to be incurred by postal library members. Patrons should be charged the reduced rates. Experience from other branches where this service is offered indicates that many people terminated their membership due to prohibitive costs.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY LIBRARY USERS

CONFIDENTIALITY

All the information that will be gathered in this questionnaire will be treated as confidential. In the questions below there are no right or wrong answers. You are asked to be as objective as possible. Please tick [] or mark [] in the appropriate boxes.

QUESTIONNAIRE NUMBER _____
DATE ISSUED _____
DATE RETURNED _____
ISSUED BY _____

1. AGE

2. GENDER Male
Female

3. RESIDENTIAL AREA

Estate _____ (if residing within Kabarnet Municipality)

Location _____

Division _____

4. Please specify your occupation.

(e.g. civil servant, farmer, house wife, etc) _____

5. What is your level of education and training?

(a) less than 8 years of schooling

(b) secondary education (F4)

(c) high school education (F6)

(d) vocational training

(e) college training

(f) university degree/diploma

(g) professional training (e.g. CPA)

(h) others (please specify) _____

6. What would you say your income range per month is?

(a) no income

(b) below Ksh. 1,000

(c) 1001 - 5,000

(d) 5,001 - 15,000

(e) 15,001 - 25,000

(f) 25,001 - 35,000

(g) over 35,000

7. How would you rate the following features of the library?

	[Excellent]	[Good]	[Fair]	[Poor]	[V. poor]
(a) availability of books	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
(b) availability of newspapers, magazines, , etc.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
(c) competence of staff	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
(d) staff co-operation/assistance	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
(e) attitude of staff towards public	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
(f) appearance of building (well painted, clean)	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
(g) reading environment (quiet, noisy)	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
(h) overall quality of service	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

8. 19. If fees were to be introduced what areas of the basic library service would you like to be improved by KNLS?

9. Specify if you are aware of the following services:

	YES	NO
(a) book reservations	[]	[]
(b) inter-library loans	[]	[]
(c) postal membership	[]	[]
(d) institutional membership	[]	[]
(e) mobile library	[]	[]
(f) reference service	[]	[]

10. What is your main reason for using the library?

11. Do you know about the cost-sharing concept introduced recently by the government in the health and education sector?

- (a) YES []
(b) NO []

12. What is your general opinion about cost-sharing policy?

13. Have you paid for health services through the above scheme (cost-sharing)?

- (a) YES []
(B) NO []

14. If KNLS was to introduce cost-sharing would you be willing to pay?

- (a) YES []
(b) NO []

15. If your answer to question 10 is **NO** which of the following answers would support your reason?

- (a) library services should be free []
- (b) lack of personal income []
- (c) poor library services []
- (e) others (specify) _____

16. If the library was to charge for the following items: (a) borrowing card, (b) identification card, and (c) application form, during your registration would you have paid for them?

- (a) YES []
- (b) NO []

17. If the library was to obtain an item for you from another library or notify you to collect an item you have reserved, are you willing to pay for the postal or telephone charges?

- (a) YES []
- (b) NO []

18. If an annual fee was to be introduced how much are you willing to pay?
[Ksh.-----]

19. If fees were introduced would you prefer to pay as:

- (a) a family OR
- (b) an individual

20. Please give reasons for the above answer.

21. If you were to pay as a family how much are you willing to pay per year?
Ksh.-----]

22. If user fees (cost-sharing) were to be introduced what are the likely effects?

- (a) affects free flow of information []
- (b) reduction of library users []
- (c) discrimination of the poor []
- (d) money might be diverted for other uses []
- (e) overcharging to collect more money []
- (f) others (specify) _____

23. How would you propose the money collected from user fees (cost-sharing) to be used?

- (a) purchase books, journals and newspapers []
- (b) renovation of library building []
- (c) repair torn books []
- (c) pay staff allowances []
- (d) fuel mobile library []
- (e) pay water, electricity and telephone bills []
- (f) set up video library, []

(g) others (specify) _____

24. As an alternative to cost sharing which other sources of funds would you recommend for KNLS?

25. Which of the following members of the society would you recommend for exemption if fees were to be introduced?

- (a) pre-school children []
- (b) students in:
 - (i) primary school []
 - (ii) secondary school []
 - (iii) colleges []
 - (iv) university []
- (c) physically disabled persons []
- (d) pensioners []
- (e) others (specify) _____

26. As a condition for introducing user fees (cost-sharing) which areas of the library service would you like to be improved?

APPENDIX II

LIBRARY STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

All the information that will be gathered in this questionnaire will be treated as confidential. In the questions below there are no right or wrong answers. You are asked to be as objective as possible. Please tick [] or mark [X] in the appropriate boxes.

QUESTIONNAIRE NUMBER _____

DATE ISSUED _____

DATE RETURNED _____

ISSUED BY _____

1. AGE [_____]

2. JOB DESIGNATION _____

3. How would you rate the following features of the library

[Excellent] [Good] [Fair] [Poor] [V. Poor]

- | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| (a) availability of books | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| (b) availability of newspapers, magazines, etc. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| (c) competence of staff | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| (d) attitude of staff towards public | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| (e) appearance of building (well painted, clean) | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| (f) reading environment (quiet, noisy) | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| (g) overall quality of service | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |

4. Which of the following complaints do you receive most frequently from users?

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| (a) insufficient books | [] |
| (b) lack of relevant books | [] |
| (c) limited reading space | [] |
| (d) few opening hours | [] |
| (e) unco-operative staff | [] |
| (f) others (specify) _____ | |

5. Do you think the users are aware of the following services?

- | | YES | NO |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|
| (a) inter-library loan | [] | [] |
| (b) postal membership | [] | [] |
| (c) reference service | [] | [] |
| (d) institutional membership | [] | [] |
| (e) mobile library services | [] | [] |
| (f) reservations | [] | [] |

6. Do you know about the cost-sharing concept introduced recently in the education and health sector?

YES []

NO []

7. Have you paid for health services through the above scheme (cost-sharing)?

YES []

NO []

8. Do you think it is feasible for KNLS to introduce user-fees (cost-sharing)?

(a) YES

(B) NO

9. Which of the following reasons do you think can justify the charging for services?

(a) to control an influx of non-members []

(b) improvement of service []

(c) to renovate building and purchase offurniture []

(d) to fully/ partially recover increased running costs. []

(e) cover loss of or damage of library material []

(f) others (specify) _____

10. For which of the following services do you think fees can be charged?

(a) membership registration (e.g., book pockets) []

(b) book loans []

(c) inter library loans []

(d) reference service []

(e) book reservations []

(f) others (specify) _____

11. Which of the following type of fee would you recommend?

(a) one time entry fee []

(b) annual fee []

(c) deposit (security) []

OR

(d) one-time entry fee and deposit []

(e) annual fee and deposit []

12. If user fees were to be introduced how much would you recommend to be charged per:

(a) child [Ksh. _____]

(b) student [Ksh. _____]

(c) adult [Ksh. _____]

(d) institutional borrowing [Ksh. _____]

13. If fees were to be introduced, at what time of the year could the fees be charged?

(a) at the beginning of each year []

(b) staggered time frame []

14. Give reasons for your answer to the above question

15. Which of the following do you consider would be the likely impact of user fees (cost sharing)?

- | | YES | NO |
|--|-----|-----|
| (a) affect free flow of information | [] | [] |
| (b) reduction of library users | [] | [] |
| (c) lead to discrimination of the poor and needy | [] | [] |
| (d) produces insufficient financial return | [] | [] |
| (e) adverse public reaction would make the proposal difficult. | [] | [] |
| (f) money might be diverted for non-library uses | [] | [] |
| (g) government might reduce funding | [] | [] |
| (h) users might be overcharged to get more money | [] | [] |
| (I) others (specify) _____ | | |

16. Which of the following income generating activities do you think KNLS can engage in?

- | | |
|--|-----|
| (a) desktop publishing | [] |
| (b) stationery shops | [] |
| (c) canteen | [] |
| (d) internet services | [] |
| (e) photocopying services | [] |
| (f) binding services | [] |
| (g) professional services; (eg. inservice training, cataloguing) | [] |
| (h) letting of halls | [] |
| (I) letting of study carrels | [] |
| (j) others (specify) | [] |

17. Which of the following would you propose KNLS could approach for financial and material assistance?

- | | |
|--|-----|
| (a) prominent individuals and families | [] |
| (b) charitable organisations (e.g. Lions club) | [] |
| (c) local business people | [] |
| (d) Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) | [] |
| (e) municipal council | [] |
| (f) county council | [] |
| (g) local banks | [] |
| (h) others (specify) _____ | |

18. How would you propose the income likely to be generated through cost sharing and income generating activities to be utilised?

- (a) deposit into Board's account. []
- (b) return to purchase library books, etc. []
- (c) book replacements []
- (d) rebinding of books []
- (e) fuelling the mobile []
- (f) pay electricity, telephone, and water bill []
- (g) staff allowances []
- (h) initiate new projects (e.g. video library) []
- (j) others (specify) _____

19. Which of the following members of the society would you recommend for exemption if user fees (cost-sharing) was to be introduced?

- (a) pre-school children []
- (b) students []
- (c) unemployed []
- (d) pensioners []
- (e) the needy []
- (e) physically disabled persons []
- (f) others (specify) _____

MOBILE LIBRARY

20. Do you think the mobile library service is achieving its stated objectives?

- (a) YES []
- (b) NO []

21. Give reasons for your answer to the above question.

22. Do you think the mobile library service is economical?

- (a) YES []
- (b) NO []

23. Give reasons for your answer to the above question

24. If you answer to question 3 is NO what is the best option for the mobile service?

- (a) discontinue the service []
- (b) reduce routes []
- (c) charge user fees []
- (d) purchase a smaller van []
- (e) others (specify) _____

25. If fees were to be introduced in the mobile library who do you think should pay for the service?

- (a) users []
- (b) institution []
- (c) both []

26. Give your reason for the above answer

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICES

Name of school _____

Designation of interviewee _____

Interview date _____

Interviewer _____

Before the interview starts, the interviewee is assured that all the information that will be gathered in the interview will be treated as confidential. The respondents are asked to be as objective as possible.

Q1. Do you have a school library?

- a) **If YES:** Who is in charge of the library?
- b) Is she/he professionally trained?

Q2. Has the mobile library service made any positive impact in your school?

- a) **If YES:** Please specify the impact
- b) **If NO:** Please give reasons

Q3. Are the books stocked in the mobile library relevant to your school curriculum?

- a) **If NO:** What type of material would you wish to be stocked?

Q4. Has the mobile library been visiting your school regularly (i.e. after every fortnight)?

- a) **If NO:** Please specify how often you wish the mobile library to be visiting

Q5. Are you satisfied with the current arrangement of registering only the final year students?

- a) **If NO:** Please give suggestions

Q6. If KNLS was to introduce user fees would your school be willing to pay?

- a) **If NO:** Please give reasons

Q7. If user fees were to be introduced please specify who is well placed to pay between the school and the students?

Q8. If both the school and students were to pay, how much would:

- a) Your school be willing to pay?
- b) To you recommend for students should pay?

Q9. If students were to pay what would be the possible reaction from parents be?