



Harold B. Lee Library
Brigham Young University



A report on results collected from respondents at Brigham Young University during spring 2004 as well as comparisons with the spring 2003 and the spring 2001 efforts, also an assessment of comments made during 2004 and a comparison with the 2003 comments

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INTRODUCTION

During the spring of 2004, the BYU Harold B. Lee Library joined with its sister libraries in the CES Library Consortium, as well as many other libraries throughout the World in ARL's LibQUAL+™ survey to assess library service quality. This was BYU's third foray into this yearly project. The intent of LibQUAL+™ has not changed from past iterations. However, the survey instrument and the means to administer it continue to evolve and mature. With benchmarks for BYU well established from the 2001 and 2003 efforts, the advantage now in 2004 is to observe how much improvement has occurred over that time.

Formal reports of the results from the 2004 survey have been prepared by ARL and Texas A&M University (the managing agents for LibQUAL+™) for each institution that participated in the survey as well as for specific groups and consortia. These reports summarized the 2004 survey instrument questions only and did not include any analysis conducted from information provided in comments nor comparisons from past surveys. A copy of the report for Brigham Young University has been made available through the LibQUAL+™ Web site along with copies of the summary for ARL institutions and the CES Library Consortium. A formal report summarizing the CES Library Consortium data was also prepared by the Lee Library Process Improvement Specialist and sent to the member libraries. This report together with the ARL LibQUAL+™ reports is in possession of the Process Improvement Specialist. Electronic copies in PDF and Word formats are also readily available and can be viewed through the library's Web site. It is not the intent of this report to replicate the results presented in these documents. Instead, the purpose of this report is to focus on specific issues or tendencies seen in the 2004 BYU data as well as differences between the results from the last two LibQUAL+™ surveys in which the Lee Library has participated.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lee Library at BYU continues to meet patron expectations of library services. Overall, BYU's relative ranking against the other institutions that participated in 2004 improved over that seen in 2003. Their overall rank based on service adequacy and overall satisfaction of service quality places them in the top 15%. The patrons of the Lee Library continue to find the library a wonderful facility; that the library is a comfortable and inviting location from which to study and learn. But there are still areas where improvement can be made, where perceived levels of service were very close to the minimum expected level of service. How a patron perceives they are treated in the library continues to be an area in need of improvement. Improvement in the library Web site is also an area needing attention. And the need for more resources, particularly electronic and print journals, is a constant patron demand.

Comments mirrored very closely what was seen in the quantitative data in the survey, but overall tended to be more positive than the comments in the 2003 survey. Aside from the library being an excellent facility with great resources and staff, the areas for improvement again centered on quieter areas, more computers, study carrels, etc., the need to improve interactions with staff, and improving the Web site.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION SUMMARY

As in past surveys, LibQUAL+™ required a minimum sample size of potential respondents of 900 undergraduates, 600 graduates and 600 faculty/staff for large academic libraries. And as before, it was determined that BYU would take a sample larger than the minimum to ensure as large a return as possible and account for rejects since the samples would be taken from a database of email addresses where experience had shown many to be unreliable. For 2004, 1800 undergraduates, 900 graduates and 900 faculty/staff were sampled. After accounting for rejected emails, the final effective sample size turned out to be 1590 undergraduates, 835 graduates, and 840 faculty/staff.

The individuals sampled were sent an initial invitation on March 1, 2004 and the formal invitation with the URL attachment from which they could take the survey sent March 8, 2004. Overall, responses for 2004 exceeded both that seen in 2001 and 2003. However, as in past years, follow-ups were sent to ensure as

maximum a response as possible. The survey closed on the last day of March as the link to the BYU survey was officially shut down (which differed from the previous year where the link remained opened until ARL closed the project at the end of April).

The final response numbers from BYU continue to improve over that seen in past iterations of the project. For 2004 well over 50% of those sampled attempted to take the survey. In the end however, only 1003 actually completed it. Of that number, 50 of the surveys were deemed invalid due to either an inordinate number of N/A's or excessive inconsistent responses. As such, the final response size was 953 for an effective response rate of 29.2%. This figure again exceeded that seen in 2003 or 2001. BYU's number of completed surveys and valid surveys compared very favorably with other Colleges and Universities in North America that participated in 2004.

The breakdown of respondents by status – Undergraduate, Graduate, Faculty, Library Staff, and Staff – has been consistent over the three years of BYU's participation (see Figure 1 below). There are a few points to note. The large shift in Staff response from 2001 to 2003 was due to that group not receiving a formal invitation to participate in 2001. There has also been a steady decline in faculty respondents over the three years. However, it is of interest to note that student response (Undergrads and Graduates) has seen an increase over the same period. This last point is encouraging since the general consensus is that the primary patrons the library is here to serve are the students of the University.

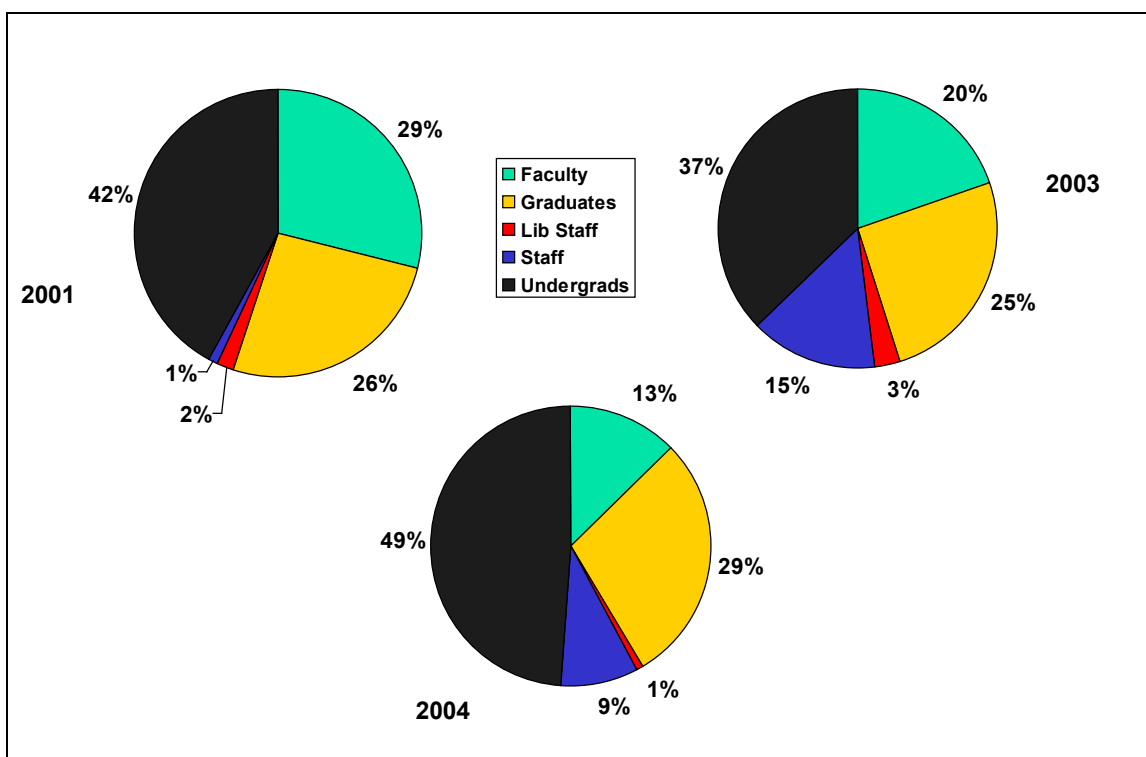


Figure 1, Demographic Breakdown - Status

Discipline breakdowns have also been fairly consistent over the three LibQUAL+™ efforts, as attested in Figure 2 below. The percent of respondents for each discipline mirrors fairly well the numbers that are reported by the University (Note: the Population figures are as of Winter Semester 2004). Some of the major discrepancies, such as in General Studies, could be due to the respondent perceiving a discipline different than what the University may show. It should also be noted that Communications/Journalism and General Studies were not separated from other disciplines for 2001 and hence show 0%. In addition, the university does not keep a record of “undecided.” Overall, response tendencies tended to be fairly representative of the population as a whole in terms of status and discipline.

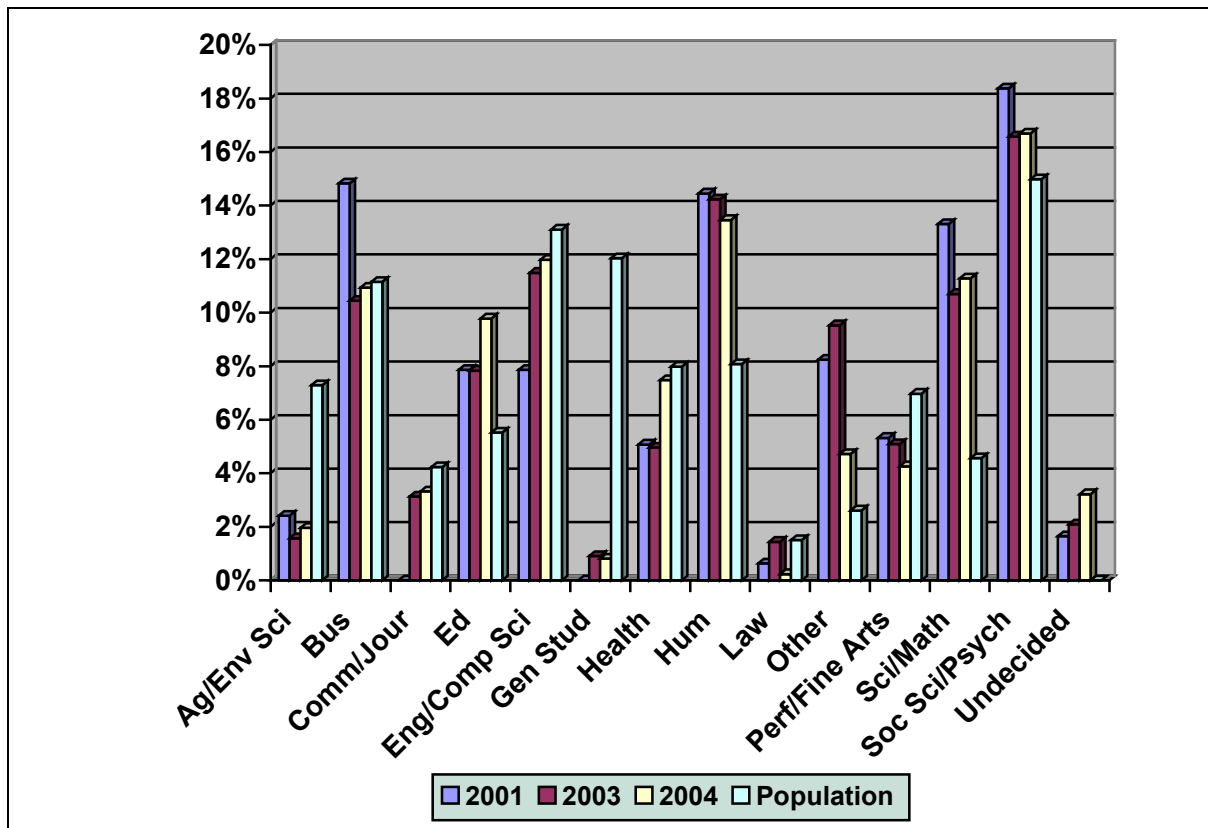


Figure 2, Demographic Breakdown - Discipline

ANALYSIS RESULTS AND COMPARISONS

The purpose of LibQUAL+™ is to give respondents a series of statements related to library service. The respondents are then asked to rate those statements as to the minimum level of service they find acceptable, the desired level of service they personally would like to see, and the perceived level of service they feel the library currently provides. Those service expectation ratings are based on a 9 point Likert scale with 1 being low and 9 being high. For 2004, those sampled were asked to provide ratings for 22 core service statements (down from 25 in 2003 and 56 in 2001). These statements were identical to ones used in 2003. Fifteen of the statements were identical to those posed in 2001. The other seven, though not exactly identical, were comparable to other 2001 statements.

In addition to the core statements, participants in the 2004 study were given the option to include up to 5 bonus statements of their choosing. After consultation with BYU's CES partners that were also participating, five bonus statements were agreed upon as defaults with three of those statements to be used by all CES libraries and two that were optional. The Lee Library did use the first four bonus statements in their survey, but altered the last that dealt with service hours to ask about users' perceptions about the availability of subject specialists (what the Lee Library prefers to call subject librarians). A list of the all the statements used in the survey, both core and bonus, is found in the appendix.

As in previous LibQUAL+™ studies, the quantitative data from the core service statements were analyzed in unique dimensions. In the past, there have been four dimensions. Those dimensions were Affect of Service (AS) – how the patron is treated in the library, Library as Place (LP) – the overall look, feel and functionality of the building and its facilities, Personal Control (PC) – the ability of the patron to find

information independently and remotely, and Access to Information (AI) – the extent of the collection and the ability of the patron to obtain the needed materials for study and/or research. Results from 2003 and past iterations have resulted in the combining of PC and AI into one dimension which was given the name Information Control (IC) – the extent of information and ability of patrons to find, use and manage it on their own.

From the ratings provided by the respondents, gaps were calculated to assess how well the institution met the minimum expectations of its patrons. A service adequacy gap was found by subtracting the minimum from the perceived level of service. An adequacy gap near zero or negative implied a need for improvement in that service area. A service superiority gap was found by subtracting the desired from the perceived level of service. A superiority gap near zero or positive implied that the library was exceeding expectations for that service area. In general, superiority gaps were ignored and the focus of analysis was on adequacy gaps.

In addition to these gap scores, the range from the minimum score to the desired score was also determined and called the Zone of Tolerance – the idea being that perceived levels of service should fall within this zone. These results are graphically displayed in the radar charts below (Note: the charts show results for comparative questions only in the same orientation as for the 2004 radar chart, being grouped in the three service dimensions under study that were described above. One bonus statement was comparable with a statement used in 2001 and 2003 and is also shown.).

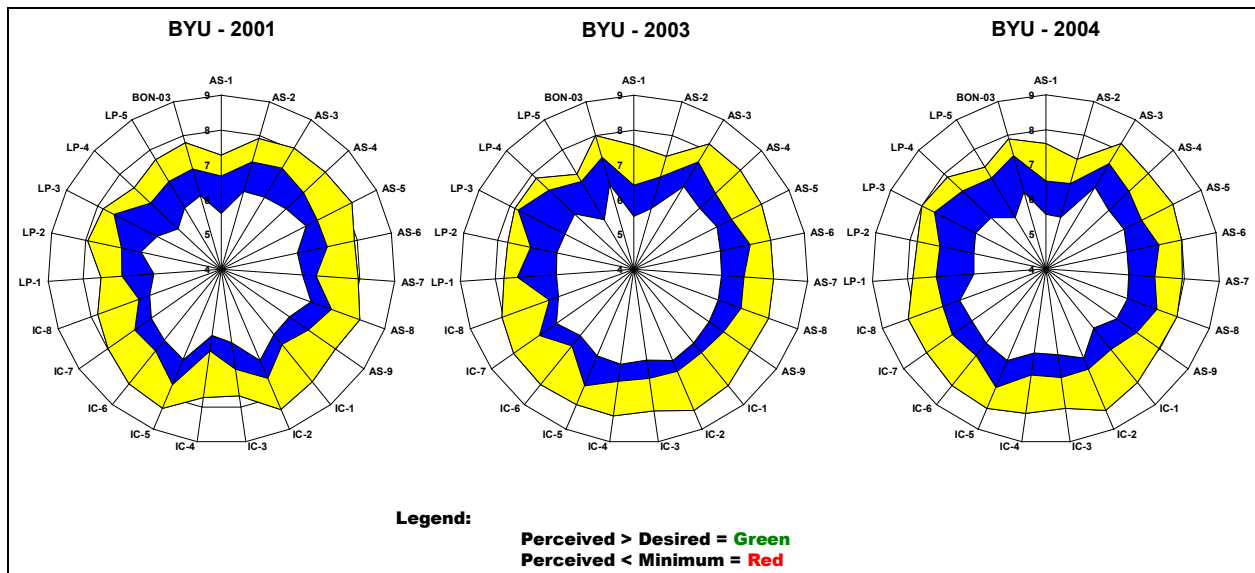


Figure 3 - Comparative Radar Charts

These charts feature multiple axes or “spokes” that represent the library service statements asked in the survey. The outer edge of the colored portion of the chart (generally yellow) reflects the desired level of service. The inner edge of the colored portion of the chart (generally blue) reflects the minimum level of service. If the chart shows green on the outer edge of the colored portion of the chart, that indicates that the perceived is greater than the desired, or in other words, service superiority. If the chart shows red on the inner edge of the colored portion of the chart, that indicates that the perceived is less than the minimum, or in other words, service inadequacy.

As evidenced in all three charts with the predominance of blue and yellow, patrons at BYU feel that the library is meeting their expectations of service as put forth in the survey statements. Some areas, such as the Library as Place (LP) statements, have seen consistent improvement over the three studies. Others, such as the bonus statement (BON-03) have shown little if any change in perception. Some

statements, particularly several in Information Control (IC) are much closer to the minimum than the other statements and would therefore suggest the need to be first in terms of investigating ways to improve.

Another way to view this is to look at the actual ratings that went into the radar charts above. They are shown in the table below (see page 7). In addition to the ratings, the adequacy gap is calculated for each statement. The rows are grouped according to the dimensions studied. The overall average rating and gap score is also shown for the core statements. The bonus statements included in the 2004 study are also included as well as the corresponding values for bonus statement 3 from 2003 and 2001.

As is seen in the overall figures, the perception patrons have in regards to library services (as measured by the adequacy gap score) continues to improve. In 2004, the LP dimension showed the highest gaps and IC the lowest, which also mirrored past results. Looking at specific statements shows a mix of results. Some of the statements saw statistically significant changes in perception from 2001 to 2004. IC-1 (Making electronic resource accessible from my home or office), LP-5 (Community space for group learning and group study), and BON-03 (Efficient interlibrary loan/document delivery) saw significant improvements in perception. IC-3 (The printed library materials I need for my work) saw a significant drop in perception from 2001 to 2003, but the data from 2004 suggests it is heading back up. One area saw its level of positive perception drop significantly; that was AS-3 (Employees who are consistently courteous).

Over and above the significant changes in adequacy gap, there were several items that still suggested in 2004 that improvement could be made, where the adequacy gap score was closest to zero. Of the four that were the lowest, three values were in the IC dimension, and the other in AS. They were, in order from nearest zero up, IC-2 (A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own), IC-6 (Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own), IC-8 (Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work), and AS-5 (Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions). In comparison, the four items that were highest in customer satisfaction for 2004 (had the largest adequacy score) were all in the Library as Place dimension. This has been consistent since the inception of LibQUAL+™ at BYU. Patrons think highly of the facility and it would appear that the administration is doing the right things to keep it a haven for study and research.

But another question arises from looking at both the lowest and highest gaps, how do the relative levels of expectation reflect how well the library is meeting those levels of service? One way to answer that is to look at the actual ratings and observe how they stack up one against another. For instance, the four statements that had the highest average desired level for 2004 were IC-2, IC-5, IC-6 and IC-8. It could be implied from this that these were the four areas most important in the minds of respondents. Note that three of those four also were in the group of four with the lowest adequacy gap. In contrast, the four statements that had the lowest average desired level for 2004 were AS-2, LP-5, AS-1 and LP-2. It could be implied from this that these were the four areas that were least important in the minds of respondents. Two of those happened to be in the group of four with the highest adequacy gap. The implication here is that those areas where the gap is lowest are also the areas that tend to be most important in the minds of respondents. And the areas where patrons feel the library is doing its best job based on the gap score tend to be the areas the respondents feel are the least critical.

As each dimension is studied in more detail, some aspects bear mentioning. Across the board, Library Staff consistently had higher gap scores in all three dimensions with Faculty and Staff consistently the lowest. This is interesting since for LibQUAL+™ as a whole, Library Staff respondents tended to be harsher on their library than the other respondent groups. But at BYU, Library Staff thinks very highly of the library, its resources and of themselves. For AS, students (undergrads and grads) had lower average desired levels of service for AS, implying it was least important in their minds when compared to Faculty, Staff or Library Staff. Undergrads had the highest desired levels of service in LP. However, it should be pointed out that across the board, LP had the lowest expectations of service than did the other dimensions, even though it had the highest gaps. Graduates and Faculty were nearly always one and two in IC desired levels, which overall had the highest expectations. Finally, it was interesting to see that the lowest expectations were in the bonus statements as a whole than any of the other service dimensions, even LP.

Table 1 – LibQUAL+™ Results
 (An * marks a statement that saw a significant change in Gap over any of the three studies)

		2001				2003				2004			
BYU Results		Min	Des	Perc'd	Gap	Min	Des	Perc'd	Gap	Min	Des	Perc'd	Gap
Affect of Service	AS-1	5.60	7.28	6.68	1.08	5.52	7.57	6.41	0.89	5.57	7.60	6.53	0.96
	AS-2	6.32	7.90	7.21	0.89	5.82	7.37	6.76	0.94	5.55	7.27	6.55	1.00
	*AS-3	6.41	8.06	7.39	0.98	6.78	8.19	7.60	0.82	6.74	8.20	7.53	0.79
	AS-4	6.54	8.09	7.23	0.69	6.58	8.17	7.20	0.62	6.47	8.02	7.27	0.80
	AS-5	6.73	8.21	7.10	0.37	6.67	8.11	7.15	0.48	6.52	8.10	7.08	0.56
	AS-6	6.24	7.91	7.11	0.87	6.54	8.01	7.41	0.87	6.39	7.98	7.32	0.93
	AS-7	6.33	7.94	6.73	0.40	6.52	8.02	7.17	0.65	6.39	7.93	7.14	0.75
	AS-8	6.74	8.24	7.37	0.63	6.58	8.12	7.27	0.69	6.49	8.00	7.40	0.91
	AS-9	6.39	8.00	7.04	0.65	6.63	8.06	7.14	0.51	6.49	7.97	7.18	0.69
Information Control	*IC-1	6.41	8.16	6.78	0.37	6.72	8.30	7.09	0.37	6.18	8.19	6.97	0.79
	IC-2	6.85	8.38	7.40	0.55	6.85	8.41	7.19	0.34	6.78	8.41	7.12	0.34
	*IC-3	6.13	7.68	6.90	0.77	6.63	8.11	7.17	0.54	6.48	8.03	7.15	0.67
	IC-4	5.93	7.72	6.37	0.44	6.75	8.25	7.25	0.50	6.43	8.19	7.08	0.65
	IC-5	6.82	8.34	7.60	0.78	6.71	8.23	7.64	0.93	6.85	8.34	7.69	0.84
	IC-6	6.61	8.24	7.02	0.41	6.46	8.26	6.83	0.37	6.74	8.30	7.19	0.45
	IC-7	6.46	7.99	7.04	0.58	6.72	8.23	7.32	0.60	6.60	8.19	7.28	0.68
	IC-8	6.19	7.78	6.52	0.33	6.31	8.03	6.59	0.28	6.63	8.21	7.15	0.52
Library as Place	LP-1	5.95	7.47	6.87	0.92	6.23	7.75	7.36	1.13	6.08	7.84	7.16	1.08
	LP-2	6.37	7.93	6.95	0.58	6.27	7.70	7.04	0.77	6.12	7.78	7.12	1.00
	LP-3	6.07	7.83	7.47	1.40	6.22	7.84	7.73	1.51	6.27	8.00	7.60	1.33
	LP-4	5.71	7.43	6.79	1.08	6.33	7.83	7.34	1.01	6.16	7.87	7.28	1.12
	*LP-5	6.05	7.67	6.94	0.89	5.65	7.18	6.93	1.28	5.71	7.41	7.05	1.34
Overall Average		6.32	7.91	7.01	0.69	6.44	7.99	7.19	0.75	6.35	8.00	7.18	0.82
Bonus Statements	BON-01									5.62	7.39	6.32	0.70
	BON-02									5.97	7.61	6.77	0.80
	*BON-03	6.20	7.78	7.00	0.80	6.54	7.99	7.34	0.80	6.29	7.88	7.39	1.10
	BON-04									5.70	7.46	6.90	1.20
	BON-05									5.59	7.47	6.48	0.89

The service dimensions studied can also be effectively summarized through the Zone of Tolerance chart. Reiterating what has been mentioned above, the Zone of Tolerance is in essence the range from the desired level of service to the minimum level of service. Ideally, if a library is doing well in meeting the expectation of service for patrons, the patron's perceived level of service will fall well within the Zone of Tolerance. The Zones of Tolerance for the service dimensions and for the 2004 survey overall is shown in Figure 4 below. The grey boxes reflect the Zone of Tolerance. The red diamond is the perceived level of service. As shown, the perceived levels are within all the zones, with the perceived level for Information Control closest to its minimum. Information Control also has the highest desired level (the top of the zone) of any of the dimensions, implying, as stated previously, it is the most important in the minds of the respondents. And though Library as Place has its perceived level furthest from the minimum, it also had the lowest average desired level.

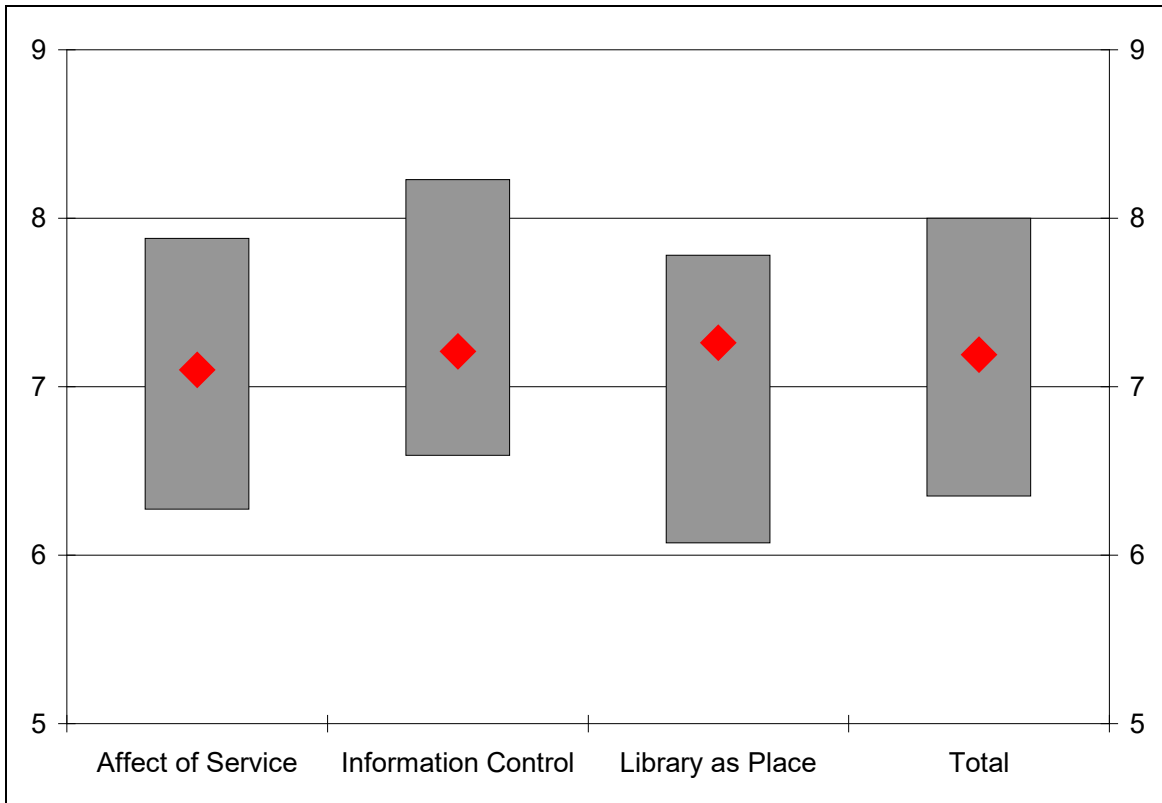


Figure 4 - Zones of Tolerance for 2004

Where perceptions and attitudes change rapidly due to local circumstances, rankings may not have the same meaning as they would for other standards or statistics, such as those reported yearly by ARL for their annual statistical survey. However, for relative purposes, ranks for the adequacy gaps were determined. In all three years BYU has participated in LibQUAL+™, it has ranked favorably in service adequacy to that of the other institutions that participated. This simply means that the patrons of the Lee Library at BYU rated the adequacy of its services higher than did patrons at other institutions rate the adequacy of their library services. This is NOT to imply that BYU was better than another institution.

Table 2 below shows the rankings of BYU for the overall adequacy gap as well as the gaps for the service dimensions studied for all three years. The 2001 rank is against the other 42 institutions that participated in that survey. For 2003, their rank is against the other 307 participating institutions. Finally, the current 2004 rankings are displayed. Here BYU is ranked based on the final 198 institutions that actually participated in the survey. The researchers and analysts for LibQUAL+™ also separated the institutions into comparable groups. The Lee Library Administration was interested to observe how BYU fared against other institutions that are only Colleges and Universities (other groups were Academic Health

Science, Academic Law, Community College, etc.) or ARL Institutions. Note that for 2001 and 2003, four dimensions were under study. Personal Control and Information Access were collapsed into Information Control for 2004.

For the aggregate, BYU improved in its ranking from what it was in 2003, but still not quite as good as in 2001. Its 2004 ranking places it in the upper 15% of all the institutions that participated. That ranking improves just slightly in the groups of more comparable institutions, with it ranking second against the other participating ARL institutions. As evident in the rankings, BYU's strong point continues to be in Library as Place. Its weakest area has consistently been Affect of Service.

Table 2 – LibQUAL+™ Ranks for BYU

	2001 Aggregate (N=43)	2003 Aggregate (N=308)	2004 Aggregate (N=198)	Colleges & Universities (N=144)	ARL (N=40)
Affect of Service	6	136	52	31	9
Library as Place	4	41	9	5	1
Personal Control	4	105	26	16	2
Information Control Information Access	1	43			
Overall	2	73	26	15	2

It is also of interest to note how BYU changed in service adequacy in 2004 relative to the other institutions that also participated in the 2001 and 2003 surveys. Fourteen libraries, including BYU, took part in all three efforts. BYU's relative position in overall mean adequacy gap for 2004 against the 2003 and 2001 gaps can be seen in the graph below (see Figure 5). There are several interesting things to point out. In 2001, BYU had the highest overall service adequacy gap in this comparative group. Only two other institutions in the group had gaps that exceeded .4 and two institutions actually had gaps below 0 (where perceived was less than the minimum). In 2003 all institutions saw increases in their gap scores with three of them having equal or greater gap scores than BYU and none having a score less than .2. In 2004, BYU regained the top spot and was only 1 of 4 institutions that showed an increase in gap over 2003 (only one institution had their 2004 gap drop below their 2001 figure). Once again, as in 2003, no institution had an overall gap less than zero.

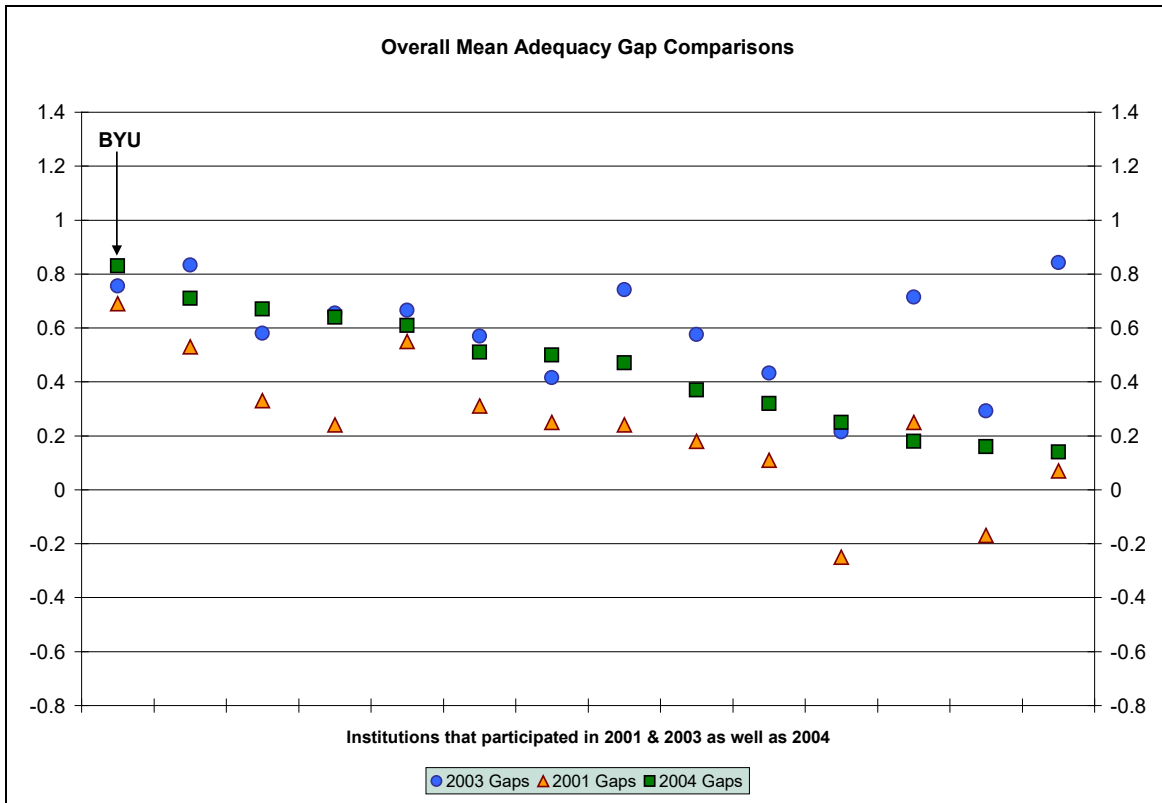


Figure 5 - Comparisons of Institutions that Participated in LibQUAL™

Many inferences can be drawn from the observations made from Figure 5. The most logical is that what is being seen is nothing more than simple shifts due to variation. As with any survey repeated over time, there are expected levels of error that would account for variability in responses. In the case of many of the institutions displayed in Figure 5, including BYU, the shifts are small enough to most likely be within that error. However, some of the shifts are large, and though no statistical test was done, it would appear to be a significant shift. This could imply in a couple cases that the libraries made sufficient changes in their respective services to such an extent as to raise the perception their patrons had of their library's ability to meet their minimum expectation for service (note the fourth institution from the left and the fourth from the right). At any rate, it would appear that BYU continues to match up favorably with others that have participated in LibQUAL+™.

As mentioned previously, each institution was also offered the opportunity to add up to five additional bonus statements. The statements used by BYU, with one exception, were not previously part of any other iteration of the LibQUAL+™ survey. The radar chart summarizing the responses to those statements is shown in Figure 6 below (the values that created the chart have been included in Table 1 above). The item showing the smallest gap is BON01 (Making me aware of library resources and services). BON04 (Easy access to archival materials (documents, manuscripts, and photos), particularly of LDS origin) has the largest gap. The bonus statement that was of most interest to administrators, BON05 (Availability of Subject specialist assistance), had the median gap for the five statements. At any rate, as seen in the core statement charts above, patrons feel the library does well to meet their expectations for all these services. But again, it is interesting to note that the average desired level of the bonus statements was lower than those seen for the service dimensions to come from the core statements. This would imply that though the library meets patron's expectations in these areas, they are not as critical in importance as LP, AS, and especially IC.

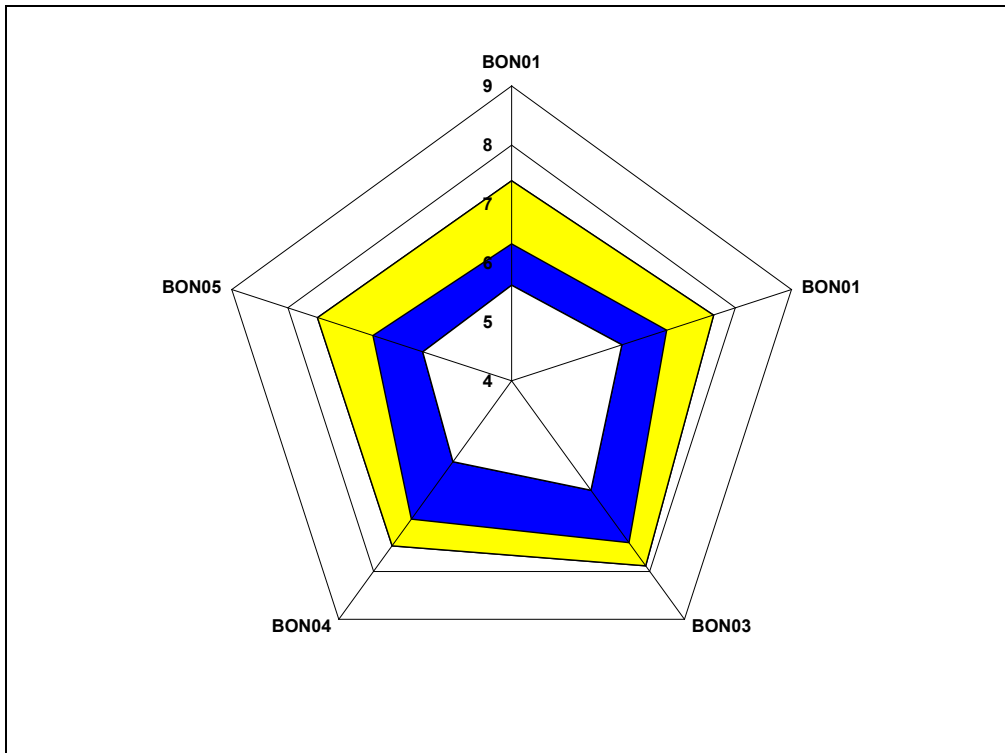


Figure 6 - Radar Chart of 2004 Bonus Statements

Another set of questions that were asked on all three surveys dealt with general patron satisfaction. These questions were rated on a 9 point Likert scale with 1 being low (Strongly Disagree or Extremely Poor) and 9 being high (Strongly Agree or Extremely Good). One question rated the overall quality of the service provided by the library; one asked the patron to rate their satisfaction in the way in which they are treated at the library; and the last to rate their satisfaction with library support for learning, research and/or teaching needs. Figure 7 summarizes the results for 2004 and also displays those results next to similar results from 2001 and 2003. As seen below, the changes in rating are very minimal. There is virtually no difference in response over the three surveys to the patrons rating any of the three satisfaction questions. However, 2004 numbers are consistently higher than the numbers from the past two surveys. It is interesting to note that the treatment question has the highest satisfaction scores of the three studies. In comparison, some of the related Affect of Service core statement gap scores tended to show significant declines from 2001 to 2004 (though on average, Affect of Service was up in 2004 from 2003). The support satisfaction question continues to lag behind the other two in all the surveys. However, it is important to remember that the averages for all three satisfaction ratings continues to be very high, all above 7 based on the 9 point Likert scale.

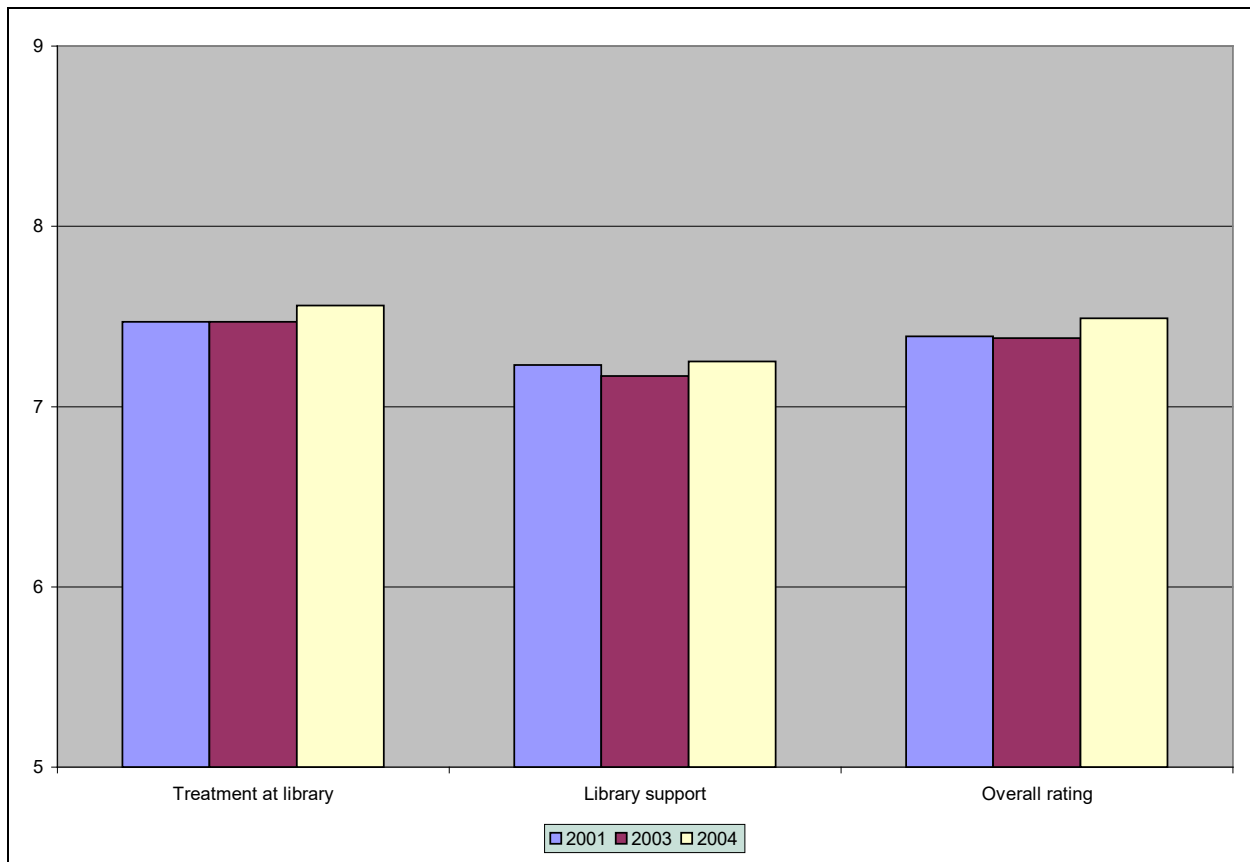


Figure 7 - Satisfaction Question Results Comparisons

The next set of questions for 2004 dealt with the use of library resources. Identical questions were asked in the 2003 survey, but only one of the questions was asked in 2001. The first question asked all three times was “How often do you use resources on library premises?” The second question asked in the 2003 and 2004 surveys was “How often do you use library resources through a library Web page?” A variation of that question was asked in 2001: “How often do you access library services remotely?” The last question that was also asked in the last two surveys was “How often do you use Yahoo™, Google™, or non-library gateways for information?” Response for each question could be daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly or never. The results from these questions are summarized below (see Figures 8, 9 and 10).

The most overwhelming point to come out of these results is that patrons use non-library gateways, like Yahoo™ and Google™, more frequently than any library resource. It is interesting to note that daily use of library resources has increased from 2001 to 2004, but so has daily use of non-gateway resources from 2003 to 2004. As reflected in other studies (see particularly results of Web site usability testing conducted during the end of winter semester 2004), with the proliferation of the World Wide Web and the ease at which individuals can access and use the tools available on the internet, individuals (students, faculty and staff alike), will always exhaust non-gateway search engines for initial research and seeking for information before going to library resources. The one exception to this is if the individual has been specifically directed to a library resource, as the case would be for an assignment made by a professor to his or her students.

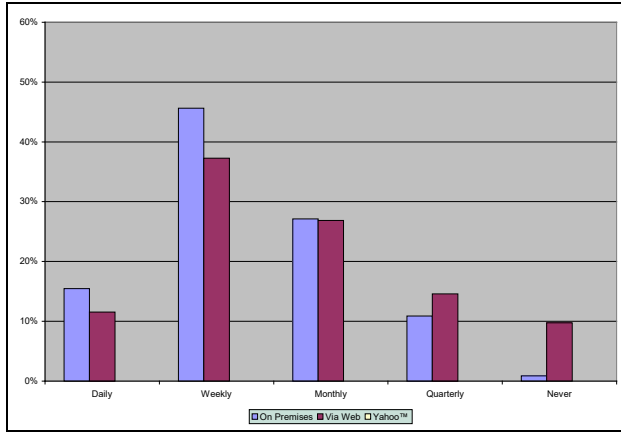


Figure 8 - 2001 Use Results

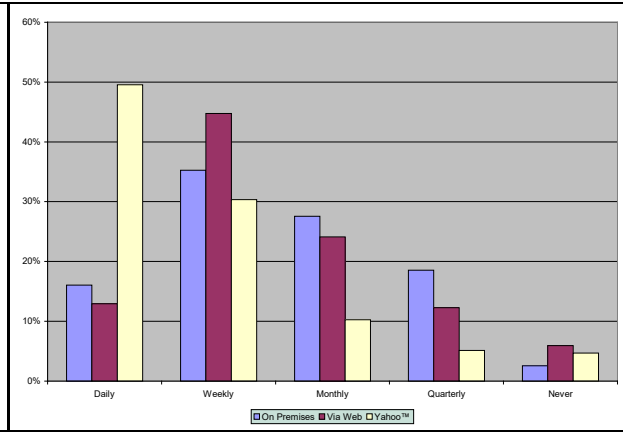


Figure 9 - 2003 Use Results

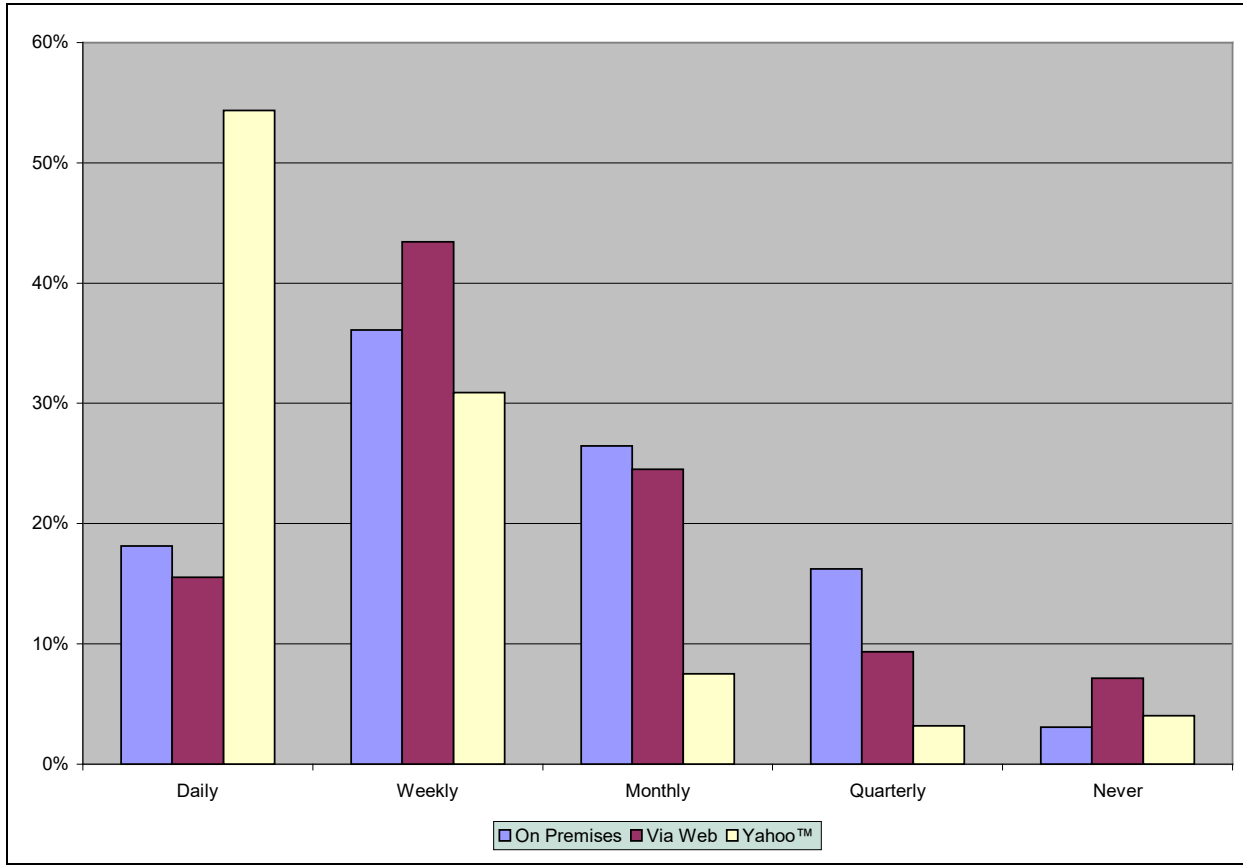


Figure 10 - 2004 Use Results

The last set of five questions covered information literacy outcomes. These questions were asked in both 2003 and 2004 and are found in the appendix. Response for each question was on a 9 point Likert scale with 1 being strongly disagree and 9 strongly agree. On average, responses to all five questions tended to be on the positive side (agree) with no average below 5.5. The only question to show a significant difference between the years was outcome four – the library helps me distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information. It was significantly more positive in 2004 than 2003, even though the relative difference was trivial. The results for these questions have been summarized below in Figure 9.

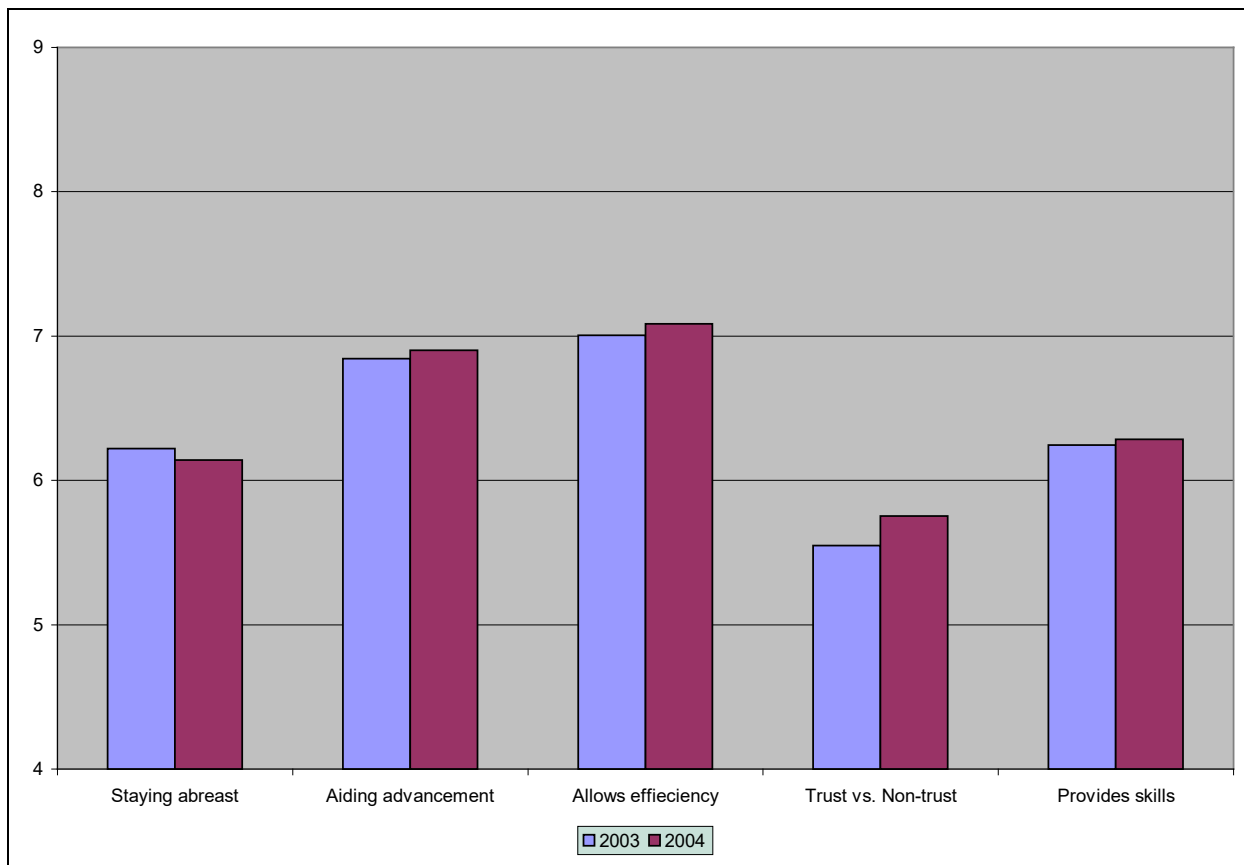


Figure 11 - Results for Literacy Outcomes Questions

QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF COMMENTS

As in 2003, LibQUAL+™ instituted a comment box at the end of the survey to elicit qualitative assessments of library services from respondents. Information from those comments proved to be invaluable in 2003, as informative as the results from the quantitative portion of the survey. Therefore, the comments to come from the 2004 survey were greatly anticipated. For 2004 411 of the 1003 completed surveys had data in the comment box. This mirrored very closely the numbers seen in 2003. Of the 411, a total of 571 distinct comments were made about the services provided at the Lee Library as well as other issues.

Just as last year, the comments were grouped into 7 categories to better facilitate assessment and analysis. These categories included facilities (comments about the building, its furnishings and environment, and related issues), general (comments of no specific nature, or related to the survey), library personnel (comments dealing specifically with personnel issues within the library including library faculty, library staff – full-time, part-time and student – and library security), library policies (hours, circulation, restrictions, etc.), library resources (books, journals, etc.), online and/or electronic resources (electronic databases, online journals, etc.), and library Web site.

The majority of the comments for 2004, some 127, were directed to library resources. General, facilities, and library personnel resources also had 100 or more comments. Online/electronic resources, library web site and library policies all had fewer than 50 each. The breakdown in number of comments for each group has been summarized in the Pareto chart below (the number above each bar represents the total number of comments within the category).

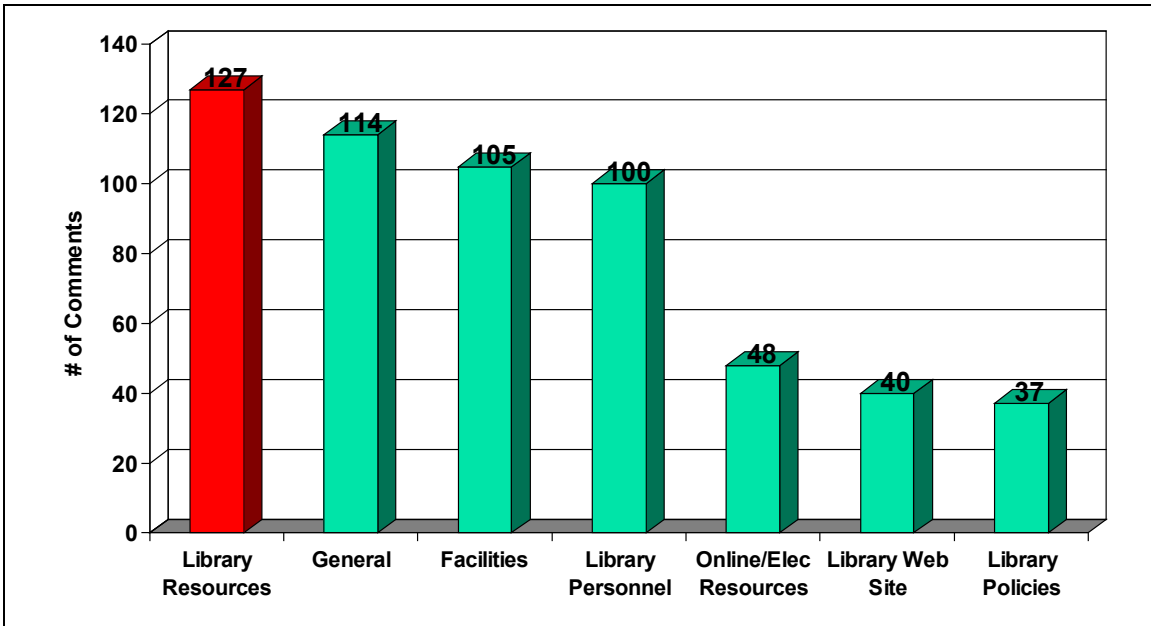


Figure 12 - LibQUAL+™ 2004 Comments Breakdown

This compared favorably to that seen in 2003. Library personnel, general, facilities, library resources also had the majority of comments with online/electronic resources, library policies and library Web site having numbers comparable to 2004.

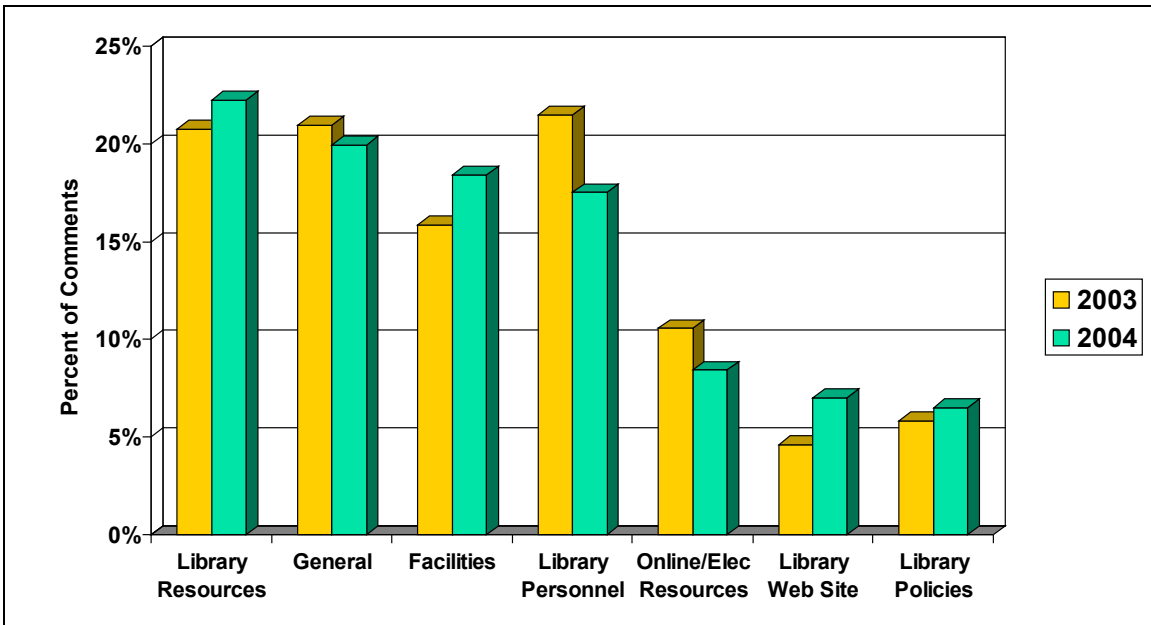


Figure 13 - Comment Group Yearly Comparisons

For 2004, the top specific comment was, as it was last year that the library was excellent. The, next three specific comments were all mentioned the same number of times - "Great place to study", "Great resources" and "Great staff". As in the 2003 report, rather than look at each specific comment item, the comments were assessed separately within each category. For the purposes of this report, only the top

scoring items within each category have been mentioned. The top comments for each category have been summarized into Pareto charts and can be found in the appendix.

The category to receive the most comments was Library Resources. As in 2003, it had more varied items than any other category. The specific item to have the most comments was great resources. It is interesting to note that those that indicated that the library had great resources also indicated that the library met their expectations in IC. These individuals also tended to be from Science/Math. In contrast two of the next most prevalent comments in Library Resources were “More discipline specific resources” and “Need more/better help in using resources” (the comment “More resources” also managed to have several comments but not in the top 10 in this category). These two areas (which were primarily from Social Science, Engineering and Education) scored low gaps in IC, but their average desired level of service was high; higher than those that indicated the library had great resources. Another prominent comment that received the same number of mentions as those above was “ILL helpful” (primarily from Science/Math and Humanities). It should be noted that many of these specific Library Resources comments were also tops on the list in 2003 as well (though “More resources” received the most comments that year). In addition to those comments, others of note were “Great services”, “Difficulty finding resources”, and “Difficulty accessing special collections” to name a few. It would appear from all these comments, though the library’s resources are well thought of, more steps can be taken to increase them, specifically in certain disciplines, and to improve the way those resources can be located and/or utilized by patrons.

In the general category, the results did not vary much from what was seen in 2003. The single item to receive the most comments (and as mentioned above) was excellent. In this respect, the comment made by the respondent was in and of itself not specific enough to place it in one of the other categories (“I love the library”, “What a great place”, “This library is excellent”, etc.). As such, it was simply labeled “excellent” and placed within the general category. Again, the next item to receive the most comments was not library service related at all but was a comment related to the survey itself. Despite ARL’s best efforts to improve on the instrument or the mechanism to handle it, individuals still complain about it. Two other comments of note were also similar to those seen in 2003, “Limited library experience”, and “Good but could always improve.”

The facilities category was next in number of total comments. For 2004, the issue of the south entrance (the no. 1 facility comment for 2003) seems to have diminished significantly. That comment now is nestled in the middle of the other comments within this category. Replacing it as the top facility comment for 2004 was “Great place to study”. The next two items were “More computers, study carrels, etc.” and “Quieter areas”. No single demographic tended to stand out in these comments. Again, patrons that made negative comments also tended to have corresponding low adequacy gaps for LP. This trend has been pretty consistent throughout all the comments thus far. If a patron feels negatively about a given aspect of the library, the corresponding service dimension tends to have a low adequacy gap. If a patron feels positively about a given aspect of the library, the corresponding service dimension tends to have a high adequacy gap. But the levels of expectation in terms of average desired level of service are opposite. Negative comments have high levels of expectation, while positive comments are comparatively lower.

As for library personnel, of the top five comments, three were positive (“Great staff”, Staff courteous/helpful”, and “Great Subject librarian(s)”) and two were negative (“Staff impersonal/not helpful”, “Student employees impersonal/not helpful”). Issues relative to Affect of Service (AS) and the need to improve have already been addressed (see above comments in the quantitative section of this report). However, it is important to again point out the inverse relationship between expectations and adequacy gaps. Those that responded with positive personnel comments also indicated in the quantitative data that the library was meeting their expectations for those services. However, those that responded negatively showed much lower adequacy gaps, but had higher expectations (as defined by the average desired level of service) than did the positive responders. It should also be pointed out that these comments were fairly well distributed across the several demographical groups. It would seem from the information here – coupled with that learned in the quantitative results above – the library should continue to improve relations with its patrons.

Online/electronic resources is a category that could have easily been lumped into Library Resources, but was kept separate because the content of the comments dealt specifically with online and/or electronic resources as opposed to more general or printed library resources. One comment stood out more than any other in this category and that was "More full-text." "More resources" was next followed by "Improve access to information." All three indicate some aspect of improvement for online and/or electronic resources. Graduates tended to dominate this category and expressed the need for more full-text than the other groups combined. And as one would suspect, those requests came primarily from those in the Science/Math discipline. As in other categories, the negative comments in Online/electronic resources were also high in expectation and low in adequacy gap as compared to the positive comments (which in this category were far and few between). These resources need to be improved and the means to access them improved as well.

Comments in the category Library Web Site almost exclusively came from students and with a few very minor exceptions were negative in context. As in 2003, the two items to receive the most number were "Confusing/unfriendly" (a general comment about the overall library web site) and "Search confusing" (generally patrons having difficulty using the online catalog or other search capabilities in the site). Understandably, the service statement related to the library Web site had the highest expectation and the lowest adequacy gap. It would appear that the redesign that took place at the time the 2003 survey was going on resulted in a less than functional Web site. Another comment that received nearly the same attention as the previously mentioned two was "Difficulty finding resources", which was similar to comments seen in Online/electronic resources and Library resources. A new effort to revamp the Web site is underway that intends to utilize an extensive amount of user input and usability testing to verify its functionality. Hopefully through these efforts, comments about the website will improve.

The last category to review and the one with the fewest comments was Library Policies. Again, the vast majority of these comments came from students. In 2003, the top comment was "Extend hours." That comment was also made a few times but not nearly as much as "Cell phones", "Food area", and "Improve circulation policies." The cell phone issue has been a topic for patrons for some time, so it is no surprise to see it at the top of this list (it was #2 in 2003). It also relates very closely to the "Quieter areas" comments from Facilities. Library administration is making concerted efforts to address both at this time. The food comments are still of interest and certainly reflect the trend in libraries and book stores across the country that have small cafes or coffee shops within their facilities. But of particular interest was the need to improve circulation policies. These comments dealt on length of check-outs primarily, but fines also played into that.

CONCLUSION

After 3 years of LibQUAL+™, this robust library quality assessment tool is now an integral part of the Lee Library's measurement arsenal. It continues to serve as its principle barometer on how it is meeting patron's expectations of the services it provides to the university community. Since the first survey in 2001, the Lee Library has seen steady improvement in the overall satisfaction of BYU students, faculty and staff towards library services. But there are still areas in which the library can improve.

The area it has been most successful in is the library as a place. Satisfaction as measured by the difference between the perceived level of service received and the minimum level of service expected continues to be high. However, the average desired level of service for this dimension of service continues to be low when compared to how the patron is treated (the affect of service) and the number, availability and personal command of resources (information control). When measured by the level of desired service, content and access of information are more critical than the library itself or the personnel there to serve the public. The areas where the most improvement needs to occur are in the library Web site, print and electronic journals, and the tools necessary to easily access that information. But the one other area where BYU continues to lag behind others is the way the patron is treated.

In all, patrons love the library and all it has to offer. But there is always room to improve and LibQUAL+™ will continually help the library stay abreast of those needs.

Appendix

Core Service Statements

Affect of Service:

- AS-1 Employees who instill confidence in users
- AS-2 Giving users individual attention
- AS-3 Employees who are consistently courteous
- AS-4 Readiness to respond to users' questions
- AS-5 Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions
- AS-6 Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion
- AS-7 Employees who understand the needs of their users
- AS-8 Willingness to help users
- AS-9 Dependability in handling users' service problems

Information Control:

- IC-1 Making electronic resource accessible from my home or office
- IC-2 A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own
- IC-3 The printed library materials I need for my work
- IC-4 The electronic information resources I need
- IC-5 Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information
- IC-6 Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own
- IC-7 Making information easily accessible for independent use
- IC-8 Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work

Library as Place:

- LP-1 Library space that inspires study and learning
- LP-2 Quiet space for individual activities
- LP-3 A comfortable and inviting location
- LP-4 A getaway for study, learning, or research
- LP-5 Community space for group learning and group study

Bonus Service Statements

- BON01 Making me aware of library resources and services
- BON02 Teaching me how to locate, evaluate, and use information
- BON03 Efficient interlibrary loan/document delivery
- BON04 Easy access to archival materials (documents, manuscripts, and photos), particularly of LDS origin
- BON05 Availability of Subject specialist assistance

Information Literacy Outcomes Questions:

1. The library helps me stay abreast of developments in my field(s) of interest.
2. The library aids my advancement in my academic discipline.
3. The library enables me to be more efficient in my academic pursuits.
4. The library helps me distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information.
5. The library provides me with information skills I need in my work or study.

Top Comments for 2004:

