



Harold B. Lee Library
Brigham Young University



A report on results collected from respondents at Brigham Young University during spring 2006 as well as comparisons with past surveys; also an assessment of comments made during 2006 with comparisons to past comments

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INTRODUCTION

During the spring of 2006, the BYU Harold B. Lee Library joined with its sister libraries in the Consortium of Church Libraries and Archives (CCLA), as well as many other libraries throughout the world in ARL's LibQUAL+® survey to assess library service quality. This was BYU's fourth foray into this now semi-annual effort. The intent of LibQUAL+® has evolved and matured into an efficiently administered instrument. With benchmarks for BYU well established from the past efforts, the advantage now in 2006 is to observe how much improvement has occurred over that time.

Formal reports of the results from the 2006 survey have been prepared by ARL for each institution that participated in the survey as well as for specific groups and consortia. These reports summarized the 2006 survey instrument questions only and did not include any analysis conducted from information provided in comments nor comparisons from past surveys. Copies of the report for Brigham Young University and CCLA have been posted on the Lee Libraries LibQUAL+® Web site along with a formal report summarizing the CCLA data. 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 2006 BYU data as well as differences between the results from previous LibQUAL+® surveys in which the Lee Library has participated.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BYU continues to show improvement in its LibQUAL+® results. Overall, the gap between patrons' minimum and perceived levels of library services again increased, and there were no perceived levels below their respective minimum level in any of the core or local statements that are the basis for the LibQUAL+® survey. The dimension of Information Control (the availability and accessibility of resources) continues to lag in improvement, where its overall gap actually dropped from 2004 to 2006. It is also the dimension that continues to have higher desired levels of service as opposed to Affect of Service (how the patron is treated) and Library as Place (the ambience of the library facility). The specific items where the gap is the weakest are IC2 (A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own), IC8 (Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work), and IC6 (Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own). These tendencies are mirrored within each of the major demographic groups, with graduates much harder on the library than undergraduates or faculty.

General satisfaction levels all increased overall with no one group standing. The levels for the information literacy outcomes questions also increased from, albeit minimally. Library use percentages (using resources on library premises, accessing resources via the library's web site, and using non-library gateways like Yahoo™ or Google™ for obtaining info) continue to show the same tendencies with daily use of non-library gateways up from 55% to 69%, daily use of resources on premises a consistent 18.5%, and access of resources via the web site up from 16% to 20%. This continues to suggest that patrons will first go the tried route of Yahoo™ or Google™ to get the info they need before they go the library resource route. This tendency is pretty consistent across all demographic groups.

The comments continue to reflect the indicators mentioned above. Library Resources & Facilities related comments continue to have top numbers (patrons pleased with what they have but wanting more) with Library Personnel related comments a very close third. In the area of Library Resources, the top comments tended to be positive (Great services/Great resources). The comments where attention should focus included "Need more/better help using resources", "More discipline specific materials", and "More resources". In the Facilities group, "Great place to study" was tops, but "More computers, study carrels, etc.", "Quieter areas", and "More Group Study Rooms" were very close behind in frequency of mention. Library Personnel comments were generally positive, but "Student employees not helpful" and "Staff impersonal/not helpful" the two negative comments the most frequently mentioned.

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 2006, 1800 undergraduates, 900 graduates and 900 faculty/staff were sampled. This year, the number of rejected emails far eclipsed numbers seen in the past. This reduced the final effective sample size for each group, but they still managed to exceed the number required by LibQUAL+®. The final samples sizes for 2006 were 1554 undergraduates, 609 graduates, and 719 faculty/staff. In the future, it may be necessary to do substantial cleaning of the database from which emails are generated before sampling.

The individuals sampled were sent an initial invitation on March 6, 2006 and the formal invitation with the URL attachment from which they could take the survey sent March 13, 2006. Overall, responses for 2006 exceeded that seen in any other year. But as before, follow-ups were still sent to ensure that as many as possible would respond to the survey. The survey was closed on the last day of March as the link to the BYU survey was officially shut down at midnight, March 31.

Once again, final response numbers from BYU improved over that seen in past iterations of the project. For 2006, 1103 completed the survey, one hundred more than 2004's final figure. Of that number, 1076 were used in the analysis after those surveys deemed invalid due to either an inordinate number of N/A's or excessive inconsistent responses were removed. Again, this figure exceeded that seen before and continues to compare very favorably with other Colleges and Universities in North America that participated in LibQUAL+® in 2006. The breakdown of respondents by status has been consistent over the years of BYU's participation (see Figure 1 below). The Staff differences have been pointed out in past reports. For 2006, Staff was not sampled, but some respondents still indicated that status. In addition, for 2006 the survey was opened to all Library Staff to participate, but as before, their results were not included in the final results.

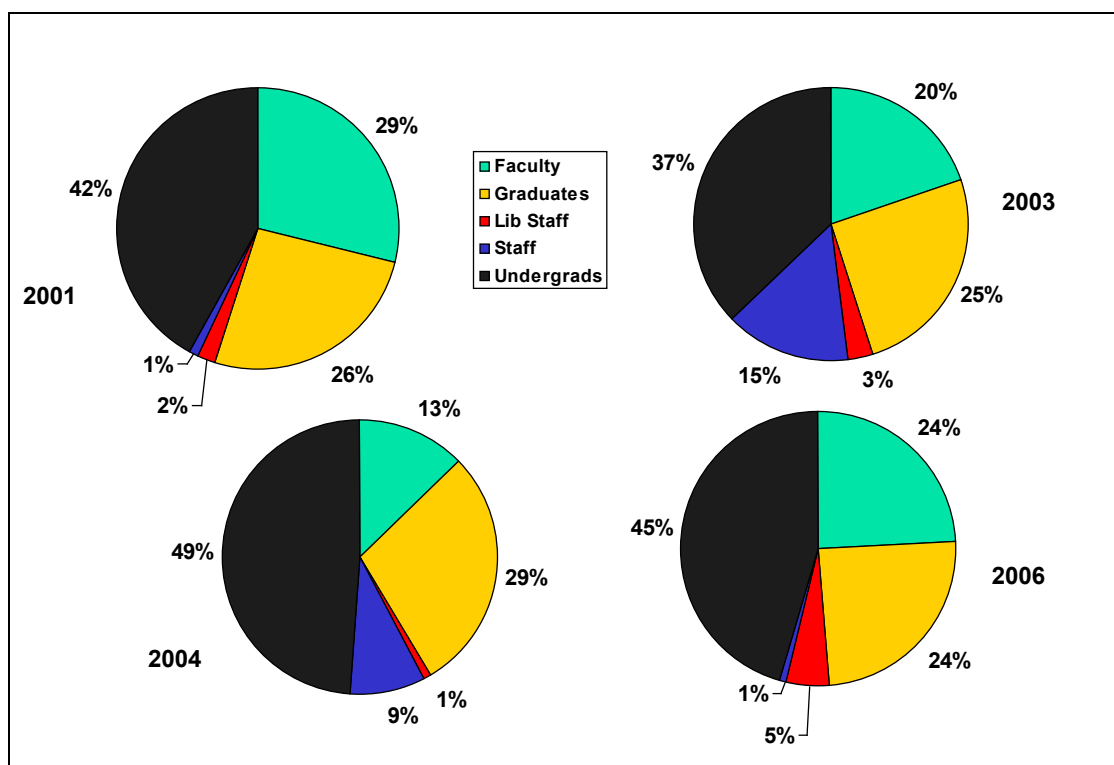


Figure 1, Demographic Breakdown - Status

Discipline breakdowns are still fairly consistent over the all the 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 2006). 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.

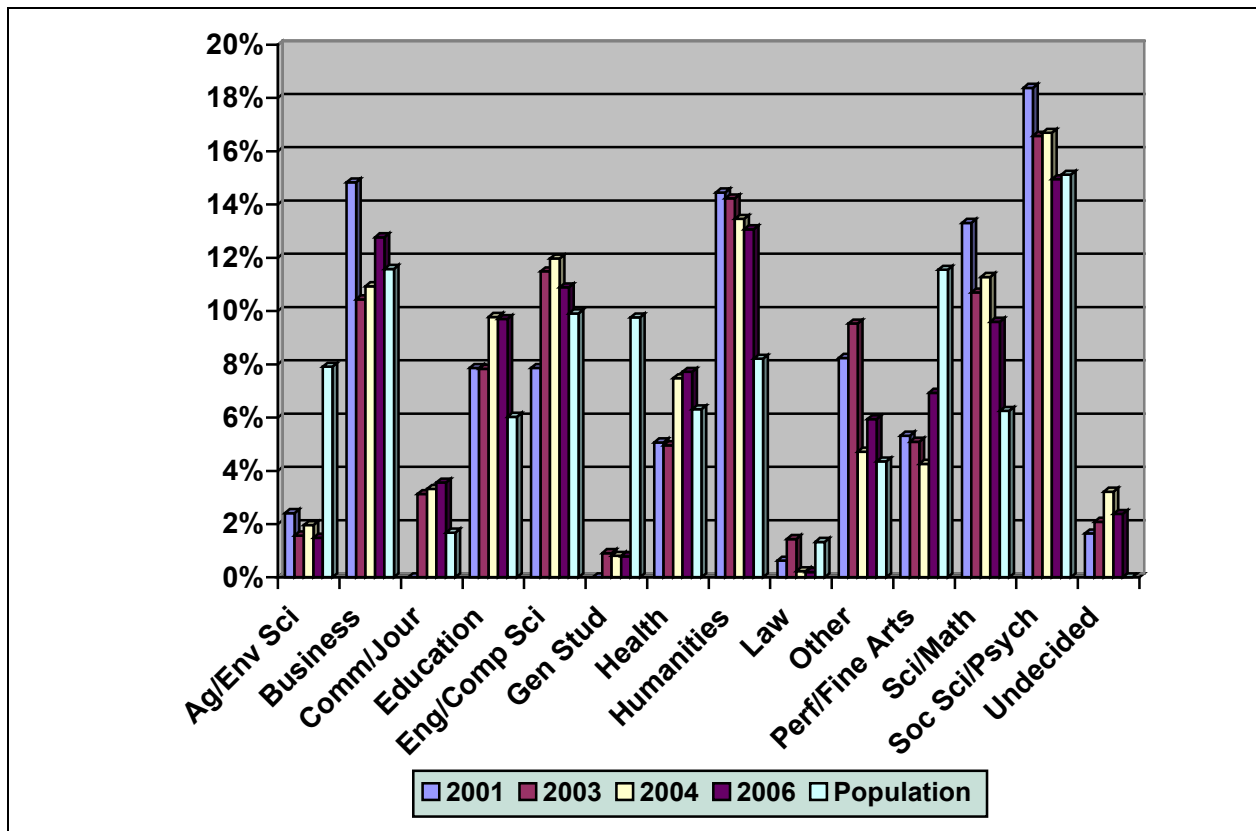


Figure 2, Demographic Breakdown - Discipline

ANALYSIS RESULTS AND COMPARISONS

Though explained in past reports, it is important to reiterate what LibQUAL+® is about and how it is administered. 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. Since 2004, those sampled have been asked to provide ratings for 22 core service statements and are comparable, if not identical, to statements from 2001 & 2003.

As had been the case in 2004, LibQUAL+® participants were given the option to include 5 additional or local statements of interest of their choosing. Though in 2004 the Consortium of Church Libraries and Archives had agreed upon default statements from which to choose, each institution was given the option

to add any statements, if they desired. The Lee Library did so, using three of the ones used in 2004 and settling on two different local questions of interest – one focusing on the availability of media and the other on the adequacy of service hours. A list of the all the statements used in the survey, both core and bonus, is found in the appendix.

As in all LibQUAL+® studies, the quantitative data from the core service statements were analyzed in unique 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, and 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 2006 radar chart, being grouped in the three service dimensions under study that were described above).

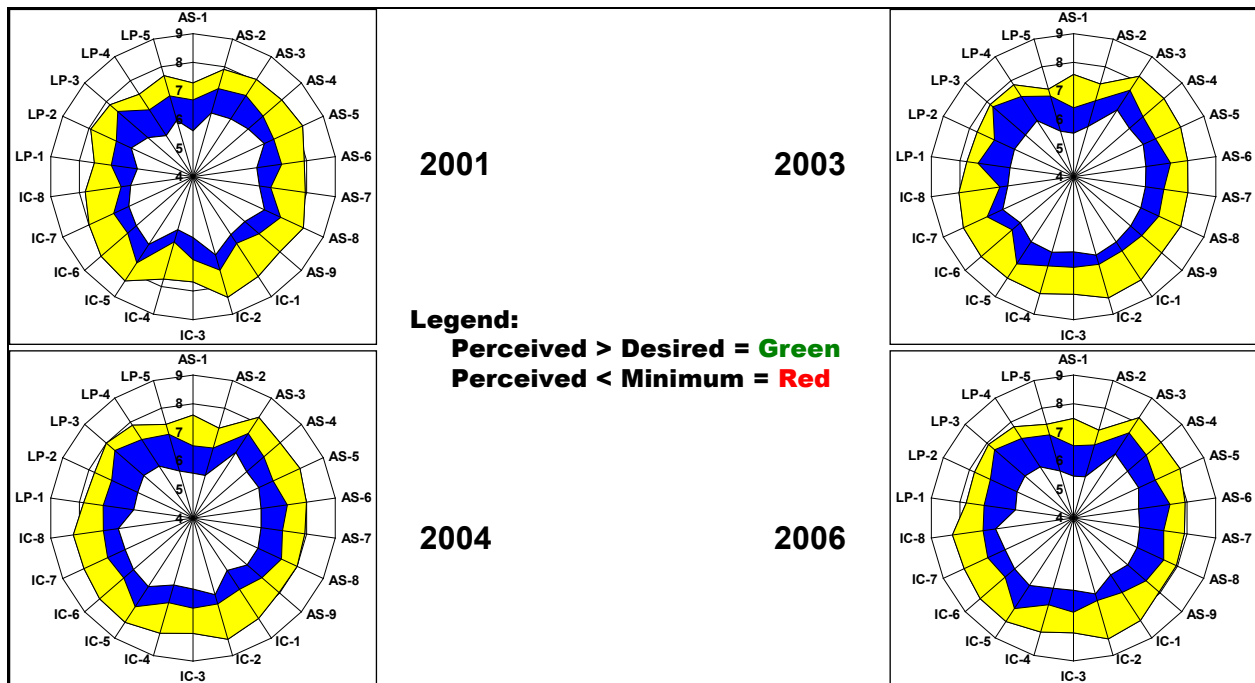


Figure 3 - Comparative Radar Charts

The radar charts in Figure 3 feature multiple axes or “spokes” that represent the library service statements asked in the survey. The circles correspond to the response level. Because average level tended to be high (above 5), the charts start at 4 at the center rather than at one to improve the overall resolution. The outer edge of the colored portion of the chart (generally yellow) reflected the average desired level of service. The inner edge of the colored portion of the chart (generally blue) reflected the minimum level of service. If the chart showed green on the outer edge of the colored portion of the chart,

that indicated that the perceived was greater than the desired, or in other words, service superiority. If the chart showed red on the inner edge of the colored portion of the chart, that indicated that the perceived was less than the minimum, or in other words, service inadequacy. As evidenced in all the charts with the predominance of blue and yellow, patrons at BYU have felt throughout the years LibQUAL+® has been administered that the library has met their expectations of service as set forth in the survey statements. In addition, the amount of blue evident has shown steady increase in most all statements from year to year.

Another way to view this is to look at the actual ratings that went into the radar charts above. They are shown in Table 1 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 each of the core statements.

As is seen in the overall figures, the perception patrons have in regards to library services (as measured by the adequacy gap score) for the most part continues to improve. Overall, the LP dimension continued to show the highest gaps and IC the lowest. However, LP still has the overall lowest desired levels while IC has the highest, implying that IC is more important to patrons than the other two dimensions. The most consistent increases have been in AS where every item showed an increase from 2004 to 2006 and all but AS-1 (Employees who instill confidence in users) and AS-3 (Employees who are consistently courteous) showing were at their highest gap. The IC dimension is still an area where improvement should be focused. There has been some progress made, as noted in IC-3 (The printed library materials I need for my work) and IC-5 (Modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information). Most of the others showed gaps at levels less than that seen in 2004, but all the IC items are still consistent with what has been observed over the four iterations of LibQUAL+®.

Looking at specific statements, within Affect of Service, AS-2 (Giving users individual attention), AS-7 (Employees who understand the needs of their users) and AS-8 (Willingness to help users) have shown the most marked and consistent increase from 2001 to 2006. It would appear that efforts to improve interactions with patrons have seen improvement. IC-2 (A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own) continues to show a downtrend trend. It would appear that despite efforts to redesign the website, patrons still find it inadequate. This may be a trend that is not unique to BYU. All the members of the Consortium of Church Libraries and Archives also saw low gap values for this item. And anecdotally, while attending a LibQUAL+® results meeting at the ALA meetings in New Orleans during June, the Director of Libraries at Texas A&M University, who is also one of the principle researchers for the LibQUAL+® project related a similar problem at A&M, which was met with consensus from those attending. And finally, LP-2 (Quiet space for individual activities) continues to lag behind other Library as Place items in terms of meeting patron expectations, even though it does well when compared to other IC or AS items.

When the items were reviewed by breaking down the results by response groups, nothing beyond the expected was revealed. Undergraduates consistently had the highest gap values in every item in the AS and IC dimensions. However, Faculty tended to be more generous in their LP perceptions. The obvious implication from this is that undergraduates were more concerned about the facility than its resources. This was somewhat reinforced as Undergraduate breakdowns were observed. In those instances where significant differences were evident, they were between underclassmen (1st & 2nd year students) and upperclassmen (3rd year and above), with underclassmen having higher gaps than upperclassmen. But this was only evident in AS & IC. In LP, underclassmen continued to have higher gaps than upperclassmen.

Table 1 – LibQUAL+® Results

		2001					2003					2004					2006			
BYU Results		Min	Des	Per	Gap		Min	Des	Per	Gap		Min	Des	Per	Gap		Min	Des	Per	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		5.46	7.48	6.53	1.07
	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		5.55	7.20	6.66	1.16
	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		6.67	8.19	7.55	0.88
	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		6.49	8.03	7.36	0.87
	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		6.50	8.09	7.14	0.64
	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		6.29	7.92	7.4	1.11
	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		6.32	7.90	7.17	0.84
	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		6.44	7.95	7.47	1.03
	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		6.50	7.95	7.35	0.85
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		6.37	8.28	7.11	0.74
	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		6.76	8.40	7.00	0.24
	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		6.53	8.02	7.30	0.77
	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		6.56	8.15	7.16	0.60
	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		6.81	8.32	7.78	0.97
	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		6.71	8.31	7.15	0.44
	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		6.63	8.20	7.30	0.67
	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		6.74	8.26	7.18	0.44
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		6.04	7.77	7.14	1.10
	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		6.17	7.80	7.19	1.02
	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		6.24	7.92	7.64	1.40
	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		6.13	7.81	7.32	1.20
	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		5.71	7.41	7.03	1.32
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		6.36	7.98	7.23	0.87

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 2006 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. It is also interesting to note that the perceived levels are virtually the same for each dimension. However, the perceived level for Information Control is 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.

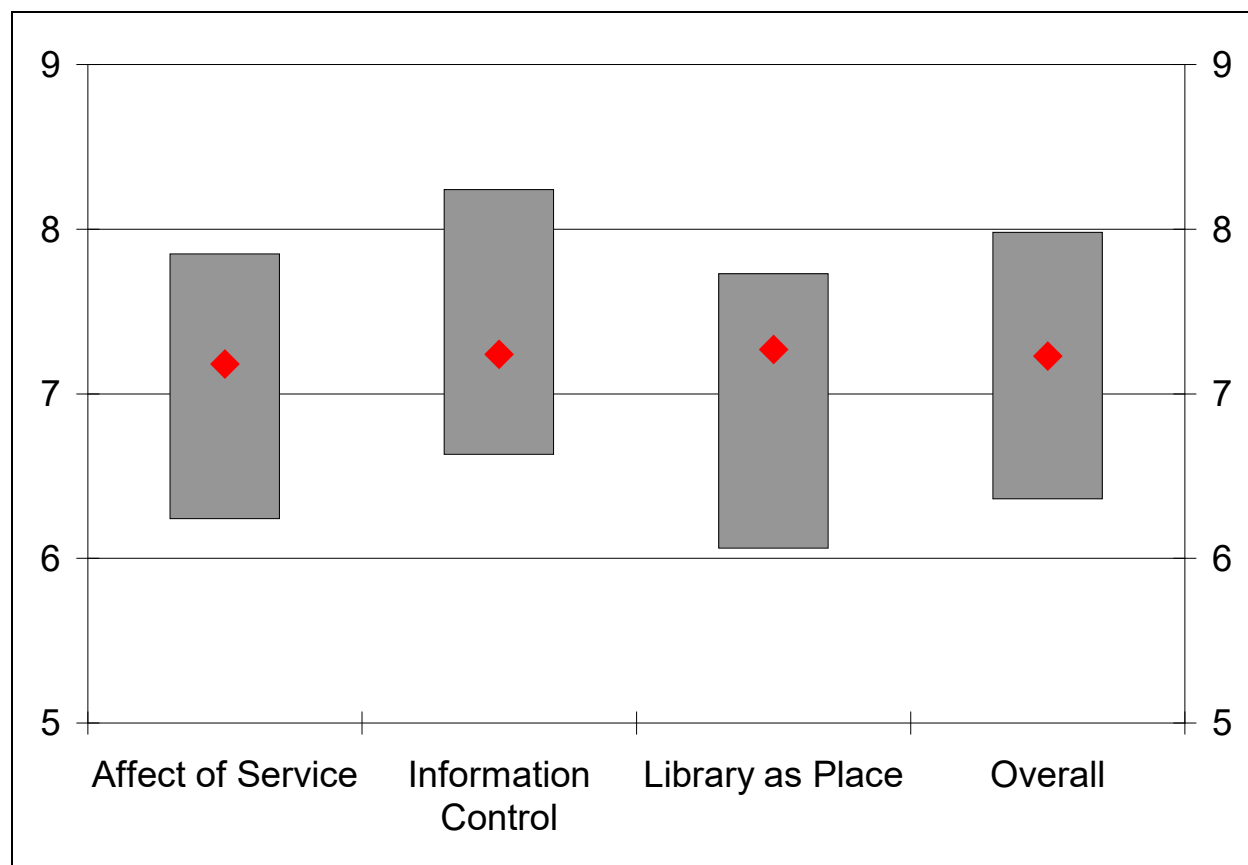


Figure 4 - Zones of Tolerance for 2004

As has been stated in past reports, 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 four 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 was based on the participation of 42 institutions. For 2003, their rank was against the other 307 participating institutions, with the 2004 rankings against

the other 198 institutions. For 2006, BYU was ranked based on the final 197 institutions that actually participated in the survey. It should also be noted that in 2001 and 2003, Information Control was split into two dimensions, Personal Control and Information Access. These continued separate until after the 2003 survey when they were combined. For the aggregate, BYU improved in its ranking from what it was in 2004, but still not quite as good as in 2001. Its 2006 ranking placed it in the upper 15% of all the institutions that participated. As evident in the rankings, BYU's strong point continued to be in Library as Place. Its weakest area has consistently been Affect of Service, although it continued to make improvement. However, the Information Control ranking slipped quite a bit.

Table 2 – LibQUAL+® Ranks for BYU

	2001 Aggregate (N=43)	2003 Aggregate (N=308)	2004 Aggregate (N=198)	2006 Aggregate (N=197)
Affect of Service	6	136	52	47
Library as Place	4	41	9	5
Personal Control	4	105	26	41
Information Control	1	43		
Information Access				
Overall	2	73	26	25

It is also of interest to note how BYU changed in service adequacy in 2006 relative to the other institutions that participated in the 2001 (see Figure 5 below). Of the 43 libraries that participated in that initial 2001 survey with BYU, 30 took part in 2003, 18 in 2004 and 13 in 2006. Only nine have taken part all four years that BYU has. The gaps are sorted by the 2001 order where BYU was ranked second. One thing to notice is that BYU's scores have been consistently high for all four years and improved from year to year. Their gaps in this group have also been the highest for the last two years, 2004 and 2006. It is also interesting to note that since 2001, no institution has shown an overall gap score less than zero.

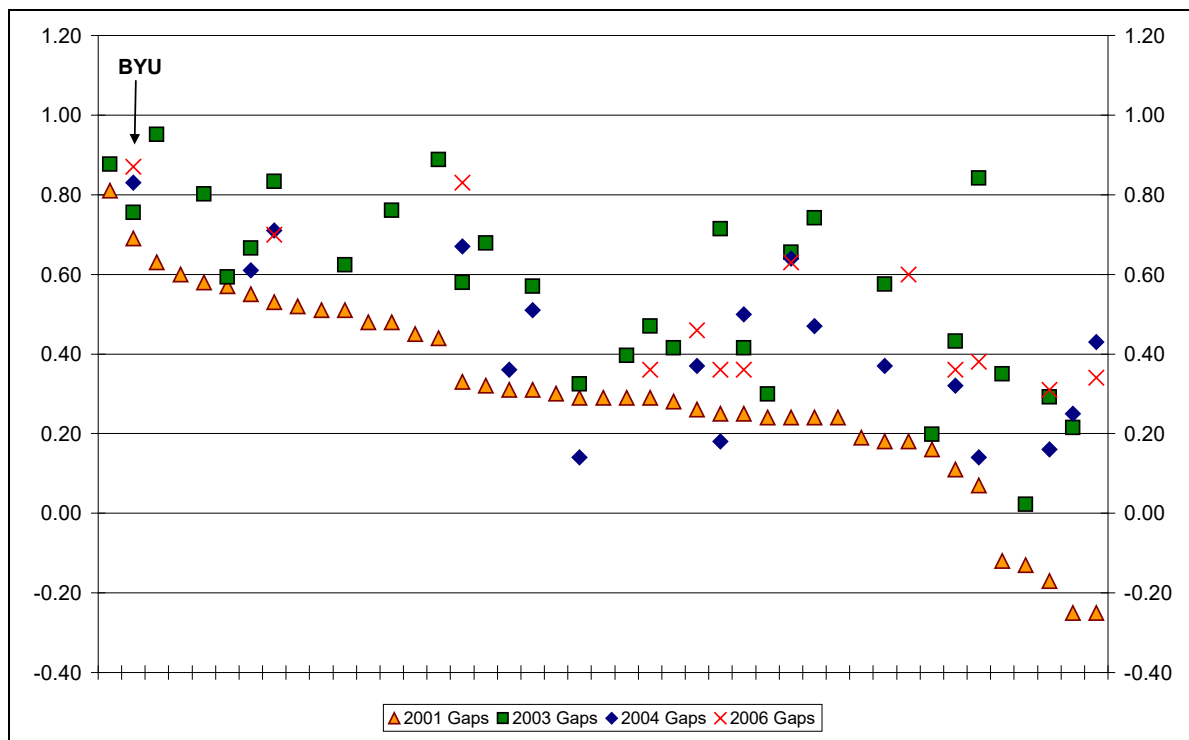


Figure 5 - Comparisons of Institutions that Participated in LibQUAL™

Some mention should be made of the local statements. As mentioned previously, all those that participated in LibQUAL+® were offered the opportunity to add up to five additional statements. The local statements used by BYU can be found in the appendix. The radar chart summarizing the responses to those statements is shown in Figure 6 below. The item showing the smallest gap was LOC-2 (Making me aware of library resources and services). LOC-5 (Adequate service hours) had the largest gap. As seen in the core statement charts above, patrons feel the library does well to meet their expectations for all these services. But, it is interesting to note that for the most part the average desired level of the local statements was generally 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 were not as important as LP, AS, and especially IC.

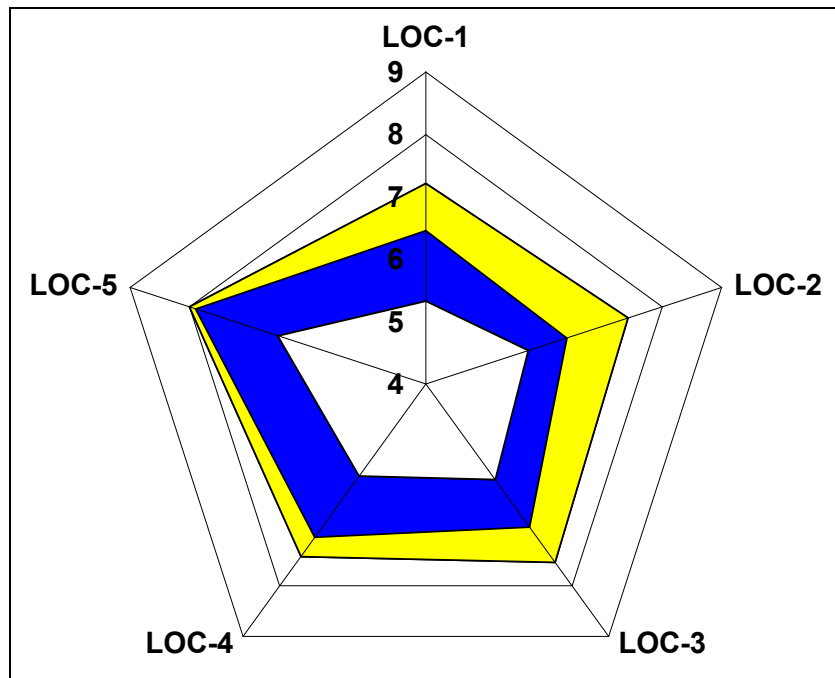


Figure 6 - Radar Chart of 2006 Local Statements

Another set of questions that were asked on all 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 every year that BYU has participated in LibQUAL+®. As seen below, the changes in rating are very minimal. There is virtually no difference in response over the four surveys to the patrons rating any of the three satisfaction questions. Even so, the numbers for 2006 are still the highest seen to date. It is interesting to note that the pattern in the three questions has been consistent from year to year. The treatment question has had the highest satisfaction scores of all the studies. The related Affect of Service core statement gap scores had seen the most consistent increases in 2006 as well, even though they 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.

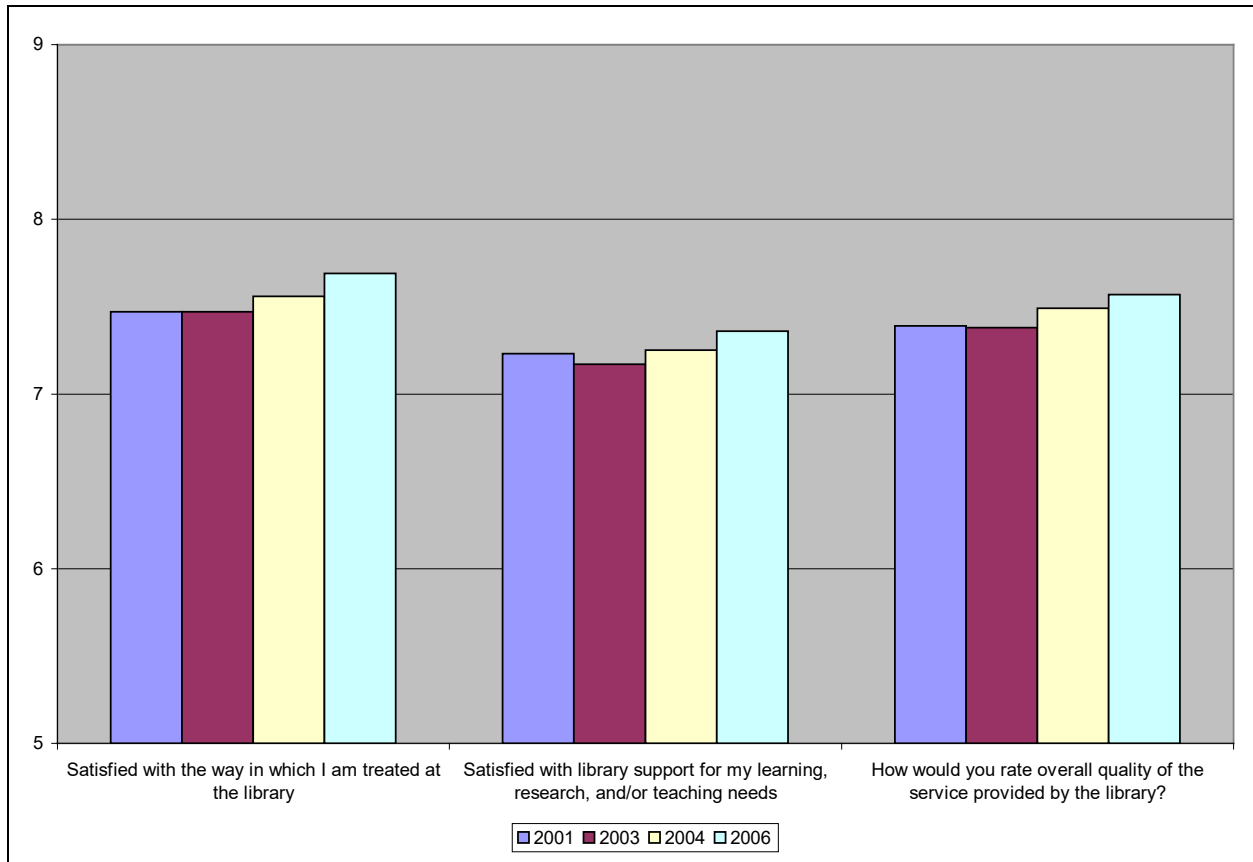


Figure 7 - Satisfaction Question Results Comparisons

The next set of questions dealt with the use of library resources. Identical questions were asked in past surveys, although there was some variation to this in 2001. The first question asked all the surveys was “How often do you use resources on library premises?” The second question asked in 2003, 2004 and 2006 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 all but the 2001 survey 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 results here have not varied since the inception of LibQUAL+®. The most overwhelming thing to note is that patrons continue to use non-library gateways, like Yahoo™ and Google™, more frequently than any library resource. This has steadily increased over the three years this question has been asked. But is also of interest to note that daily use of library resources on the premises has increased over this same period, as has the daily use of library resources via the library’s Web site. As has been pointed out in past LibQUAL+® reports, 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 (undergraduates, graduates and faculty alike), will always exhaust non-gateway search engines for initial research and seeking for information before going to library resources. Ironically, this tends to also be the tendency for library staff as well; although the difference in daily use is much less dramatic (all three of these in 2006 were above 70%). There is a perception that there is one exception to this tendency – 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, then they would go that route. Otherwise, Yahoo™ rules!

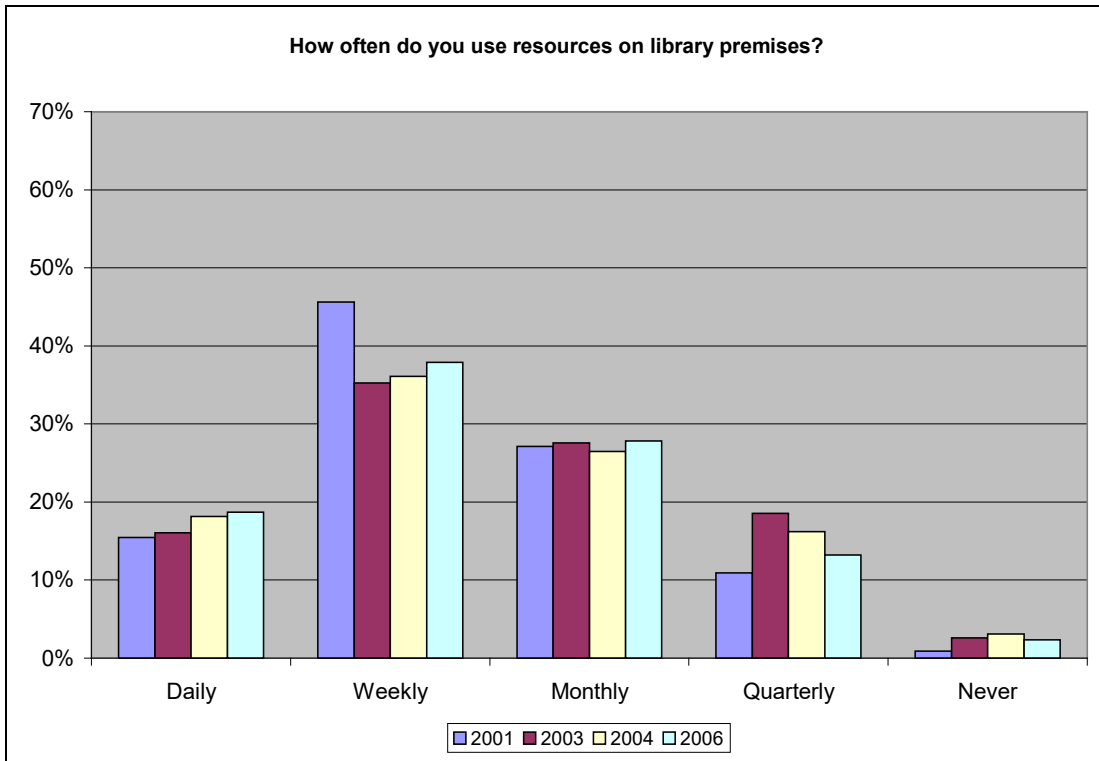


Figure 8 - Use of resources on Library premises

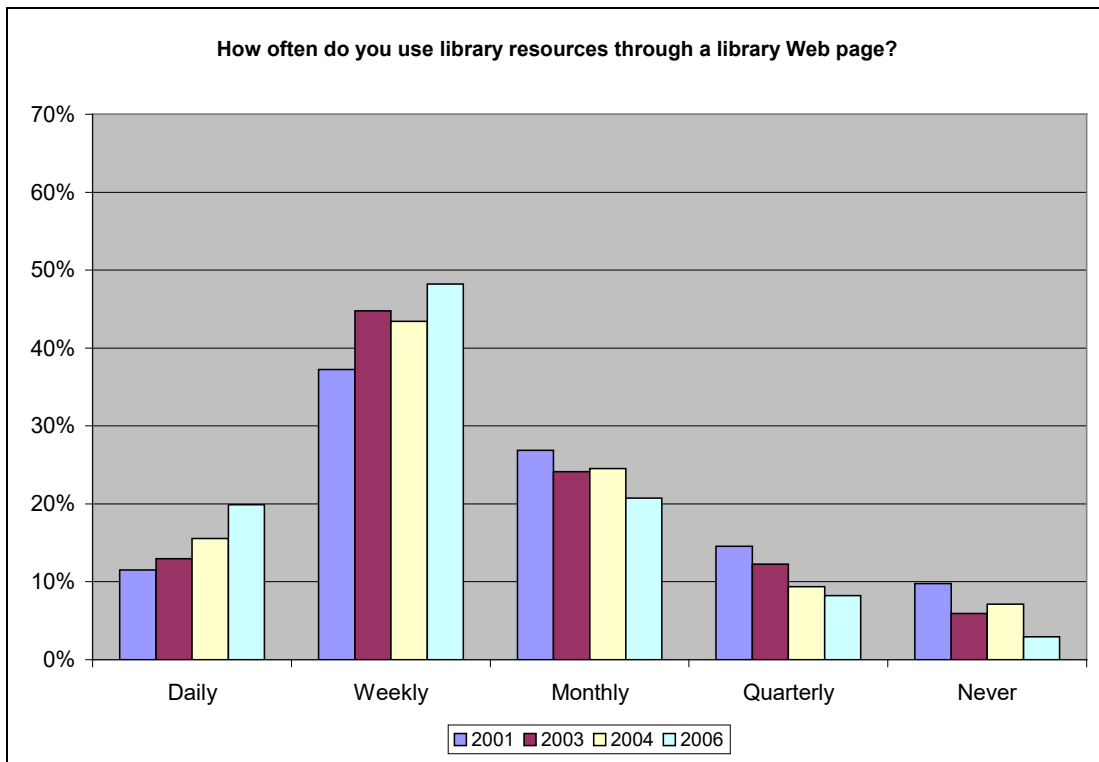


Figure 9 - Use of Library resource through Library Web site

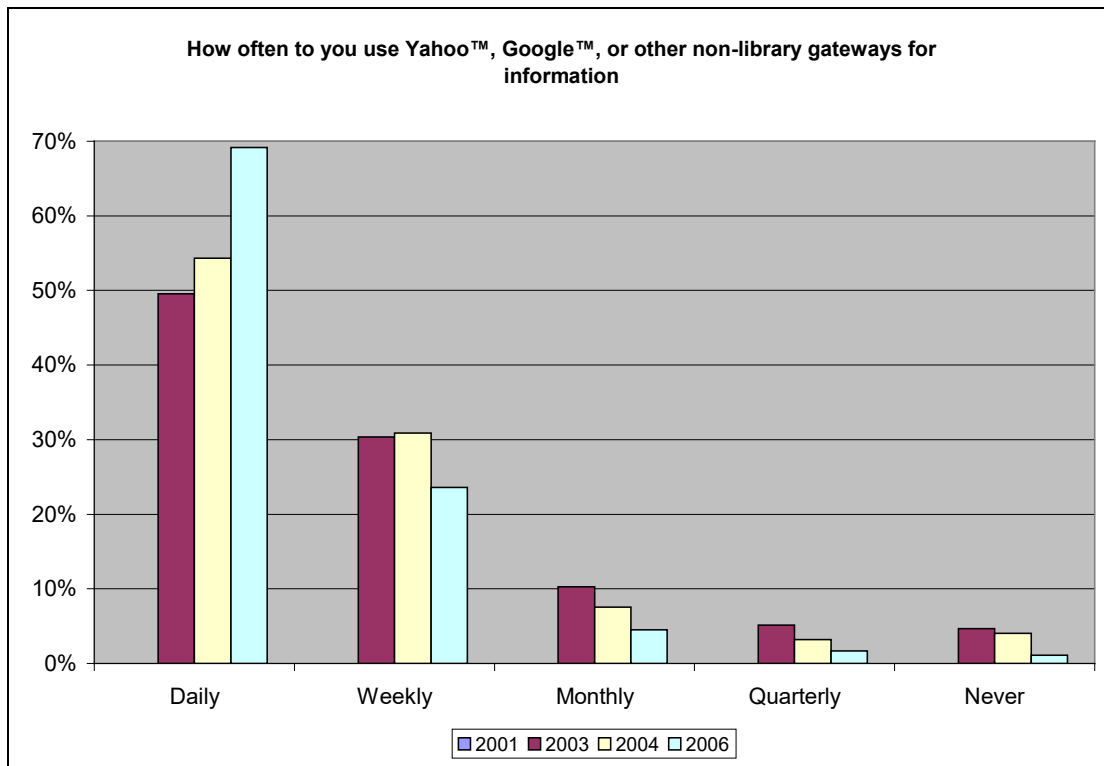


Figure 10 - Use of non-library gateways to obtain information

The last set of five questions covered information literacy outcomes. These questions were asked in the 2003, 2004 and 2006 surveys. The first asked if the library helped the patron stay abreast of developments in their field of interest. The second asked if the library aided their advancement in their academic discipline. The third asked if the library enabled them to be ore efficient in their academic pursuits. The fourth asked if the library helped them distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information. The last one asked if the library provided them with the information skills they needed in their work or study. The questions themselves were more in the form of a statement and are found in the appendix. As with the satisfaction questions, response for each was on a 9 point Likert scale with 1 being strongly disagree and 9 strongly agree. The results for these questions have been summarized below in Figure 9.

On average, responses to all five questions tended to be on the positive side (agree) with no average below 5.5. It is also apparent that for the most part there has been steady improvement in this area over the three years. The exception is where there was a slight drop in the library keeping patrons abreast of developments in their fields of interest from 2003 to 2004, but a return to the 2003 level in 2006. The most dramatic improvement in terms of year to year progress is in the library's ability to help patrons distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information. Finally, the library being able to enable a patron to be more efficient in their academic pursuits continues to have the highest rating of the five and is the only one to exceed a level of 7.

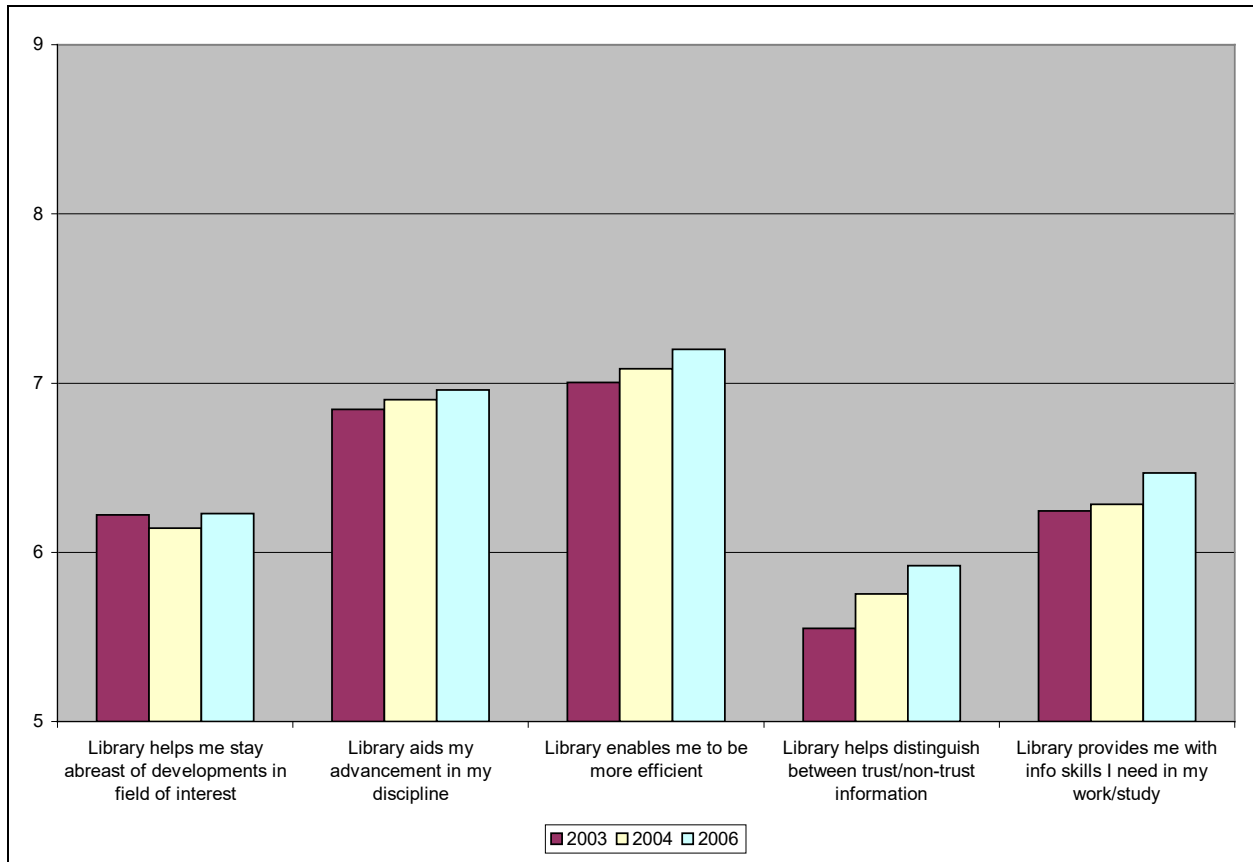


Figure 11 - Results for Literacy Outcomes Questions

QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF COMMENTS

As the researchers at LibQUAL+® are so apt to say, LibQUAL+® is not just 22 items, it is 22 items and a box! And indeed as BYU's experience has proven, this box is truly a valued component of the entire LibQUAL+® package to equal any other aspect of it. The comment box at the end of the survey is utilized to elicit qualitative assessments of library services from respondents. Information from those comments has proven to be invaluable in the past and the results obtained in 2006 were of equal importance. For 2006, 473 of the 1103 completed surveys had data in the comment box. This mirrored very closely the numbers seen in 2003 and 2004. Of the 473, a total of 709 distinct comments were made about the services provided at the Lee Library as well as other issues. To date, this has been the most comments provided by patrons during a single LibQUAL+® session.

Just as in past iterations, 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 Polices" (hours, circulation, restrictions, etc.), "Library Resources" (books, journals, etc.), Online/electronic resources (electronic databases, online journals, etc.), and "Library Web Site" (including the aesthetic nature of the site – its design and usability – and functionality of the catalog).

The majority of the comments for 2006, 181, were directed to "Library Resources" which was also the top category in 2004. "Facilities" and "Library Personnel" also had 100 or more comments and both exceeded their 2004 counts. The "General" actually saw far fewer comments than in the past. This was

due in part to efforts made to be more precise in assigning a comment to a specific category. Again, as in past surveys, “Online/electronic resources”, “Library Web Site” and “Library Policies” brought up the rear, although all three saw substantially more comments in 2006 than in 2004. The breakdown in number of comments for each category has been summarized in the Pareto chart below (the number above each bar represents the total number of comments within the category).

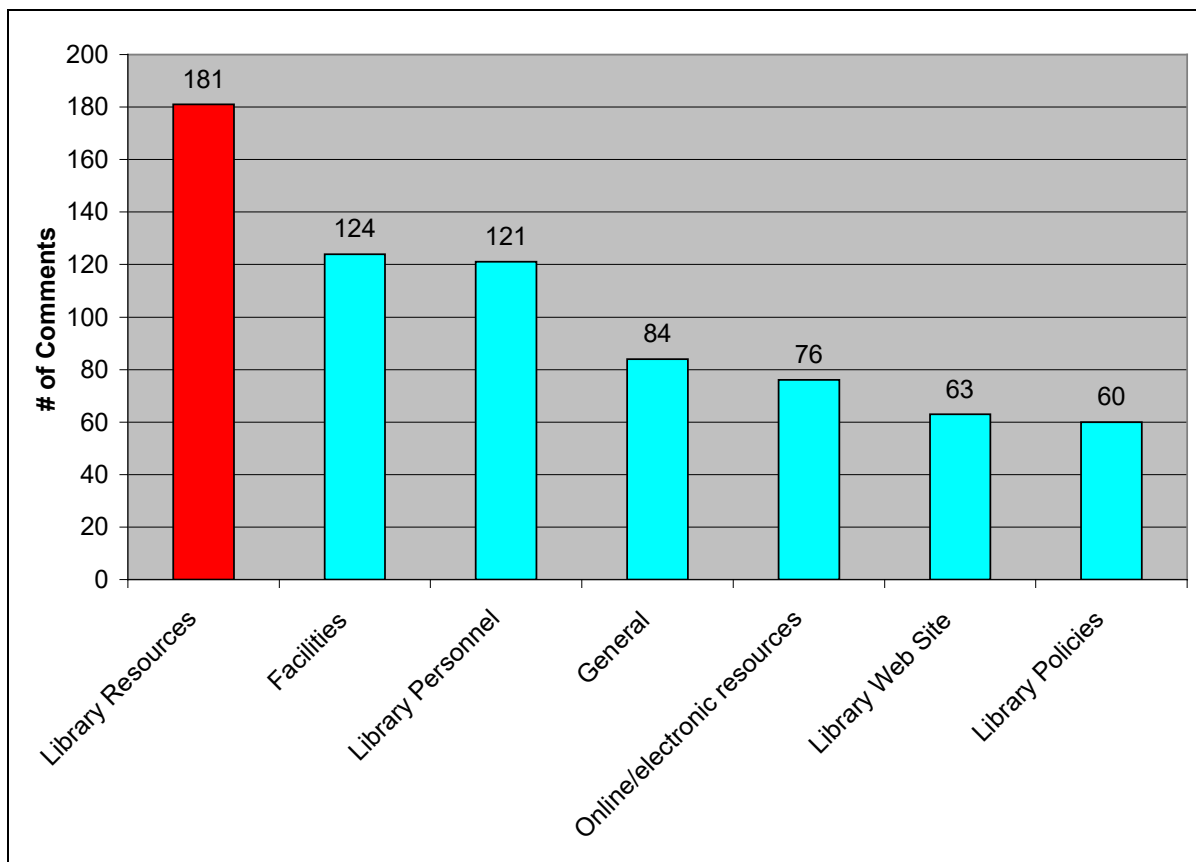


Figure 12 - LibQUAL+® 2006 Comments Breakdown

With a greater effort to be more precise in the comment analysis, the generic “Excellent” was not the most prevalent of the specific comments. “Great services” took over that spot, relegating “Excellent” to number two. The next most frequent specific comments were also very positive in nature, “Great resources” and “Staff courteous/helpful”. These were followed by “Need more/better help”, “Survey issue”, “Great place to study”, “More resources”, “More discipline specific resources”, with “Staff impersonal/not helpful” rounding out the top ten specific comments.

Breaking the specific comments down by response group (Undergraduate, Graduate and Faculty) showed some interesting if not unexpected tendencies. Undergraduates tended to be more interested in “Facilities” related issues such as more group study rooms, more computers, more study carrels, etc., while Graduates and Faculty were more concerned about resources like full-text journals, finding the resources and help in using them. This mirrored the same tendencies in the quantitative data. IC items received more emphasis from Graduates & Faculty, while LP items were given a heavier emphasis by Undergraduates.

As in the past surveys, the specific 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 top comment(s) has been highlighted in red and if there were several comments within a category

that got limited mention, they were lumped together into an “Other” group, placed at the end of the chart, and highlighted in dark blue.

Facilities

Looking first at “Facilities”, not much changed as far as emphasis from 2004 to 2006. Patrons found the library itself a great place from which to study but wanted more in the way of computers, study carrels, printers and the like. They also wanted quieter areas, which has been a recurring theme for some time now. This was interesting since another top comment in this category, which did not appear in 2004 and was a result of the success of the Information Commons, was to provide more “No Shhh” zones. This obviously requires a balance between both requests (see comments below for “Library Polices”).

One other item of difference that came out of the 2006 survey was the desire to have more group study rooms. This was principally a cry from Undergraduates, as was mentioned above and not so much a need for Graduates or Faculty. In fact, the highest ranking “Facilities” comment for those two groups, which came in sixth overall in this category, was the desire for a south entrance into the library. Despite its closure some ten years ago, this has been an issue that continues to garner enough comment to stay on the radar screen.

One other “Facilities” comment that made the top ten that may need addressing was a request to improve the comfort of chairs in the library. Though patrons were not specific as to what chairs were intended by this request, given the predominance of chairs at study tables and carrels, it would seem that their desire is to improve on the comfort of those. Certainly the library has made some effort to improve comfort by installing several lounge-like furnishings in various open places in the library. However, the patrons requested more improvement in this area overall.

General

The “General” category also did not vary much from what was seen in 2004 or 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 complained about it. But in relation to the total number of respondents, the number to comment on this has been underwhelming. Despite its perceived shortcomings, the LibQUAL+® survey continues to provide valuable information to steer library personnel to improve on the services it provides.

Two other comments of note were also similar to those seen in the past, “Limited library experience”, and “Good but could always improve.” In addition, a comment to arise in this category that was not seen in the past was “Intimidated with library”, where the size of the building and number of resources have apparently overwhelmed the patron.

Library Personnel

The next category, “Library Personnel”, has seen marked improvement over the three years comment data has been analyzed for LibQUAL+®. Positive comments continue to increase in dominance over the negative ones, accounting for just over 50% of those comments, which had not been the case in the past. Patrons commented in 2006 that the staff is helpful and courteous. In particular, patrons more and more have singled out individual subject librarians for praise, where some 13% of the total “Library Personnel” comments mentioned a specific member of the Lee Library staff as a standout in the service they render. But there is still room for improvement as nearly half the respondents commented that the staff was impersonal, not helpful, needed more training, or were noisy.

Library Policies

As for “Library Policies”, many more comments were given than ever before and there was a decided shift in emphasis. In the past, the majority of comments in this category tended to focus on cell phones, food or circulation. For 2006, the overwhelming most prevalent comment had to do with library service hours. And the nature of the comment also varied. The theme was invariably extending the hours, but the specific request was not necessarily extending evening hours, nor was it extending just the hours the library was opened. Many patrons were interested in seeing the library open earlier in the morning. Some also commented a desire to see hours for specific services (such as reference desks or computer labs) extended – both in the morning and in the evening. And a couple even commented that they would like to see the library open 24/7 – or at least from early Monday morning non-stop to midnight Saturday. There were also a few that expressed appreciation for the efforts the library has already taken to extend library hours during the last days of a semester or term.

Other policy comments of interest included “Improve circulation policies” (including check-out periods, circulation of reserve or restricted materials, return policies, and fines), “Enforce quiet study areas”, and the usual “Cell phone” and “Food area” comments. It would appear that the efforts to publicize cell phone restrictions have paid off, given the reduction in that comment. But it is interesting to note that given the trend in libraries today to have “cafés”, that cry has not been more prevalent at the Lee Library.

Library Resources

The single category to get the most comments in 2006, as it did in 2004, was “Library Resources.” Again positive comments tended to stand out. Patrons mentioned that the Lee Library had “Great services” and “Great resources” that have been invaluable in helping them with their research and study, with interlibrary loan singled out by many for its outstanding service.

But there were several comments in this category that would demand attention. With the abundance of resources, one comment to come from patrons was a need for more and/or better help in using all the varied resources. There were also many comments that indicated help was needed in finding resources. As in the past, there were several that indicated that more resources were needed, but as in 2004, there were many that indicated that specific discipline resources were also needed. In the final analysis, it was evident that for nearly every positive “Library Resource” comment, there was another comment to counter that and request that improvements be made in accessing and using said resources.

Library Web Site

“Library Web Site” continues to be an enigma. Despite efforts to design the website to meet user expectations, as has been done twice since the 2003 LibQUAL+® survey, comments in this category were again predominantly negative. And these comments mirrored the quantitative results cited above where patrons have felt that the library just meets their expectations in “A library Web site enabling me to locate information on my own” (see IC-2).

This has been a tendency that has pervaded “Library Web Site” comments since the first survey where comments were analyzed. Since 2003, the two items to receive the most number were “Search confusing” (a general comment indicating searching on the website was confusing, but not specifying if this was the site search page, the catalog, or a database interface) and “Confusing/ unfriendly” (another general comment about the overall library web site, which generally came from graduates and faculty). It would appear that the redesigns that have taken place have yet to be met with complete satisfaction. And as mentioned in the quantitative results, other institutions have had similar experiences.

Another comment to stand out in this category was a plea from patrons that the library stop changing its website. Perhaps patrons have also begun to get frustrated with the constant efforts to alter the website and have suggested that they want time to get familiar with it.

In 2006 a more specific comment came through that perhaps sheds some light on the confusion issue. Over 10% of the respondents that commented on the “Library Web Site” indicated that the catalog search needed improvement. Given the specific nature of these comments, it could be inferred that the “Search confusing” comments very possibly dealt with the same idea and that perhaps many of the “Confusing/unfriendly” comments may have been directed that way as well. If so, then the library’s ability to address this is hindered since this is an area where the library has limited control. But regardless, it is still quite telling that of the 63 “Library Web Site” comments, only 3 were specifically positive in nature; the others were negative or suggested something to improve the site.

Online/electronic resources

The final category, “Online/electronic resources”, saw a big jump in comments during 2006. This could very well reflect the increasing abundance of those resources and the insatiable appetite of patrons for ever more. This was definitely reflected in the comments themselves as patrons asked for “More full-text”, “More online journals”, and “More resources”. But they also said that “Improve access to information”, “Difficulty finding resources”, “Improve access to information from home”, and “Need more/better help” were areas that needed attention to improve their accessibility to those resources.

It is also interesting to note that over two-thirds of the comments in this category came from either Graduates or Faculty. In fact, Graduates have tended to dominate this category in all LibQUAL+® iterations. And as one would suspect, those requests have come primarily from those in the Science disciplines. And again, with the increasing number of comments in this category, this underscores the importance of it to patrons (along with “Library Resources”) and supports the quantitative results for the Information Control dimension.

CONCLUSION

As proven in the past, LibQUAL+® continues to be an integral part of the Lee Library’s assessment arsenal. It serves as its principle barometer on how the library 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.

Library as a place continues to be the area that has seen the most success. 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, online materials, and the tools and training necessary to easily access that information.

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

Local Service Statements

- LOC-1 The multimedia (CD/DVD/video/audio) collections I need
- LOC-2 Making me aware of library resources and services
- LOC-3 Teaching me how to locate, evaluate, and use information
- LOC-4 Easy access to archival materials (documents, manuscripts, and photos), particularly of LDS origin
- LOC-5 Adequate service hours

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 2006:

