Qualitative Grounding

“22 Items and a Box”

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Project web site:  http://www.libqual.org
Premise for **Mixed-Methods**

- “The underlying premise of mixed-method inquiry is that each paradigm offers a meaningful and legitimate way of knowing and understanding” (p. 7).

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<td>Describe library environment; build theory of library service quality from user perspective</td>
<td>Unstructured interviews at 8 ARL institutions</td>
<td>Content analysis: (cards &amp; Atlas TI)</td>
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<td>Test LibQUAL+™ instrument</td>
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<td>Refine LibQUAL+™ instrument</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test LibQUAL+™ instrument</td>
<td>Web-delivered survey</td>
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<td>Refined survey delivery process and theory of service quality⁴</td>
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<td>Refine theory</td>
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³ Cultural perspective
⁴ Local contextual understanding of LibQUAL+™ survey responses
LibQUAL+™ Process

- SERVQUAL dimensions served as *a priori* theoretical starting point
Gap Theory of Assessment: Perceptions, Service Quality and Satisfaction

PERCEPTIONS ← SERVICE

“…only customers judge quality; all other judgments are essentially irrelevant”

76 Interviews Conducted

- York University
- University of Arizona
- Arizona State
- University of Connecticut
- University of Houston
- University of Kansas
- University of Minnesota
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Washington
- Smithsonian
- Northwestern Medical
are there, whether they are in the library or you have established them yourself to obtain the materials from either close local libraries, or interlibrary loan, or through document delivery as often as when ever possible. Coming into the library itself is something that you just don't do much of anymore, that your graduate students spend more time in the library than you do. You haven't heard much about anything that's either any sort of issues that people have much with the library or any library. Coming back to the real central issue is access to what ever you want in a reasonable amount of time as defined as rush when you need rush, and you want someone to know that it's rush and otherwise within a week to have it.

K: The only thing that I would want to add is that I strongly feel and I've given up making or lists of journals to request each year, but I still think it's important to what ever degree possible to keep fighting for more funds for current periodicals. I know that it's a battle between the publishers trying to publish more journals and the budget to buy them. It comes down to being immediately available.

C: Is it accurate to say that you would prefer journals in electronic form that you can call up on your desk top rather than having to come over here and get them in print?

K: That would definitely be preferable.

C: Is there anything about physical facilities or that you feel is a part of quality library service you don't come into the library very much, that's why I haven't talked much about it.

K: Well, you've got to have space. I've come into the library more often for meetings I guess I am the so-called space chairman of the library and I have been convinced that is direly ne
Dimensions of Library Service Quality

Affect of Service
- Empathy
- Responsiveness
- Assurance

Ubiquity and Ease of Access
- Formats
- Timely access to resources
- Physical location

Library Service Quality

Comprehensive Collections

Self-reliance

Reliability

Library as Place
- Utilitarian space
- Symbol
- Refuge

Model 1
“You put a search on a book and it’s just gone; it’s not reacquired. … There’s more of a problem of lost books, of books that are gone and nobody knows why and nobody’s doing anything about it.”

Faculty member
Affect of Service

“I want to be treated with respect. I want you to be courteous, to look like you know what you are doing and enjoy what you are doing. … Don’t get into personal conversations when I am at the desk.”

Faculty member
Ubiquity of Access

“Over time my own library use has become increasingly electronic. So that the amount of time I actually spend in the library is getting smaller and the amount of time I spend at my desk on the web … is increasing.”

Faculty member
Comprehensive Collections

“I think one of the things I love about academic life in the United States is that as a culture…, we tend to appreciate the extraordinary importance of libraries in the life of the mind.”

Faculty member
Library as Place

“One of the cherished rituals is going up the steps and through the gorgeous doors of the library and heading up to the fifth floor to my study. … I have my books and I have six million volumes downstairs that are readily available to me in an open stack library.”

Faculty member
“I guess you’d call them satisfiers. As long as they are not negatives, they won’t be much of a factor. If they are negatives, they are a big factor.”

Faculty member
“The poorer your situation, the more you need the public spaces to work in. When I was an undergraduate, I spent most of my time in the library, just using it as a study space.”

Faculty member
Self-reliance

“...first of all, I would turn to the best search engines that are out there. That’s not a person so much as an entity. In this sense, librarians are search engines [ just ] with a different interface.”

Faculty member
Self-reliance

“By habit, I usually try to be self-sufficient. And I’ve found that I am actually fairly proficient. I usually find what I’m looking for eventually. So I personally tend to ask a librarian only as a last resort.”

Graduate student
Dimensions of Library Service Quality

Affect of Service
- Empathy
- Responsiveness
- Assurance
- Reliability

Access to Information
- Scope
- Timeliness
- Convenience

Personal Control
- Ease of Navigation
- Convenience
- Modern Equipment

Library as Place
- Utilitarian space
- Symbol
- Refuge

Model 2
Dimensions of Library Service Quality

Library Service Quality

Affect of Service
- Empathy
- Responsiveness
- Assurance
- Reliability

Library as Place
- Utilitarian Space
- Symbol
- Refuge

Information Control
- Scope of Content
- Convenience
- Ease of Navigation
- Timeliness
- Equipment
- Self-Reliance
LibQUAL+™ Related Documents

- **LibQUAL+™ Web Site**
  
  http://www.libqual.org

- **LibQUAL+™ Bibliography**
  
  http://www.libqual.org/publications/index.cfm

- **Survey Participants Procedures Manual**
  
  http://www.libqual.org/information/manual/index.cfm
What is LibQUAL+®?

LibQUAL+® is a suite of services that libraries use to solicit, track, understand, and act upon users’ opinions of service quality. These services are offered to the library community by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). The program’s centerpiece is a rigorously tested Web-based survey bundled with training that helps libraries assess and improve library services.

The Birth of LibQUAL+®
In 1999, Fred Heath and Colleen Cook, both then at Texas A & M University, realized that use or “input” variables, such as collection or serials counts, were limited as measures of library service quality.

The LibQUAL+® Survey
Since 2000, more than 1,000 libraries have participated in LibQUAL+® domestically and internationally, with participating institutions in Africa, Australia, Asia, and Europe.

View a Sample Survey
The LibQUAL+® survey is a two-page, web-based instrument. For more information about the survey instrument, click here.

How will LibQUAL+® benefit your library users?
Library administrators have successfully used LibQUAL+® survey data to identify best practices, analyze deficits, and effectively allocate resources. LibQUAL+® gives your library users a chance to tell you where your services need improvement so you can respond to and better manage their expectations. Institutional data and reports enable you to assess whether your library services are meeting user expectations—and develop services that better meet these expectations.

LibQUAL+® Top 10 Resources
A Google™ search on "LibQUAL+®" yields approximately 100,000 hits, and more than 50 refereed journal articles have been published on the protocol. To use to learn about LibQUAL+®...