LIBQUAL - Library as a Place: Before and After

Ibironke Lawal
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Fast Facts

- One of the nation’s top research universities
- Located in Richmond Virginia, the state’s capital
- Enrolls over 32,000 students
- Two campuses:
  - Monroe Park Campus James Branch Cabell Library (JBC)
  - MCV Campus Tompkins McCaw Library (TML)
- VCU Medical Center including the university health system
  - Offers state of the art care in more than 200 specialty areas
  - Serves as the region’s only level 1 Trauma Center
- This presentation is about using LibQual+ results to improve service quality
In 1974-75, James Branch Cabell (JBC) housed 251,800 volumes.

As of 2006-2007, it housed a total of 1.9 million, which exceeds 85% mark.

By 2009-2010, exceeded volume count of the planned capacity by over 90%.
Adequacy Gap Ratio (AGR) = \frac{(\text{Perceived Score} - \text{Minimum Score})}{(\text{Desired Score} - \text{Minimum Score})} \times 100

- AGR > 100% is Exceeding User Expectations;
- 0% \leq AGR \leq 100% is Meeting User Expectations
- AGR < 0% is Not Meeting User Expectations
Without adding any space, 813,146 volumes were added.

VCU Libraries replaced student space with book stacks on a regular basis to accommodate the growth.

LIBQUAL administered in 2004 was a wake-up call.
Library as a Place - All user Groups- 2004

- LP-1: -28
- LP-2: -21
- LP-3: 15
- LP-4: 0
- LP-5: 75

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ACTIONS TAKEN
2005, Compact Storage installed in the basement as on-site storage facility

3,408 sq ft, 208,985 LFI

Goals
- Relieve the overflowing stacks
- Reduce the frustration of our users
- Increase usability of the collections
In 2006, LibQual was administered again

Results – measured by Gap Scores

Open ended questions gave further insights
Library as a Place All User Groups -2006

- LP-1: -3
- LP-2: 4
- LP-3: 25
- LP-4: 20
- LP-5: 51
ACTIONS TAKEN
- Removed journals 1990 and older to Compact Storage
- Stopped subscribing to print journals wherever possible
- Stopped shelving mandatory print that comes with electronic
- Removed all subscribed JSTOR print titles to Compact storage
- Removed least used book series to Compact Storage
GRADUATE STUDENTS READING ROOM
MAPP ROOM

- Constructed from less used space next to the Special Collections on the Quiet Floor

- Opened in December 2007

- Soft furnishing and study spaces
In 2008, we administered another LIBQUAL survey to gauge where we were and where we still need to be.
Adequacy Gap Ratio for Library as a Place Questions
Comparison, Graduate Students, 2008 and 2011
Relevant questions LP-1-5

- LP-1 shows some modest improvement across board
- LP-2 shows a worse situation across board
- LP-3 – worse for undergrads, improves for grads and worse for faculty
- LP-4 Stay the same for undergrads, improves for grads and worse for faculty
- LP-5 worse across board
“A library is a unique place for quiet study, reflection and intellectual meditation. Cabell library does not foster that environment because of limitations of the physical space. It is very difficult to find a quiet spot. There is little I believe can be done to remedy the situation in the current library space. A new library is needed ...”
ACTIONS TAKEN
• 2009 – Conversion of part of the second floor to Learning Commons began.

• 2010 – VCU Acquired a building – 500 Academic Centre part of which is used as an offsite storage facility

• Library storage space – over 21,000 linear feet

• Total number of volumes moved there 250,000
THE NEW LEARNING COMMONS HAS

- 14,000 Square feet of academic work and collaborative spaces

- 1,100 square feet multipurpose room for study, instruction and more
  - Can easily be reconfigured for different needs

- 7 New group study rooms with whiteboards, monitors and other support for collaborative work

- 438 new seats
- 83 PC’s and 12 Macs computers
- 18 mobile whiteboards for use throughout the area
- 20 new laptops to expand the popular Laptop Loan Program
- Electrical Outlets throughout the facility for laptops and other mobile devices
- Ubiquitous, high-speed wireless network access
- Print stations for both Black & White and Color Printing
With the new Learning Commons, an inviting environment— we expect a more satisfied user population.

Next LIBQUAL – Expect higher adequacy gap ratio for the questions of the dimension “Library as a Place”.

Did our expectations come true?
Adequacy Gap Ratio for Library as a Place Questions
Comparison 2008 and 2011, n=648

Orange: 2008
Green: 2011

Library space that inspires study and learning
Quiet space for individual activities
A comfortable and inviting location
A gateway for study, learning, or research
Community space for group learning and group

LP-1 | LP-2 | LP-3 | LP-4 | LP-5
---|---|---|---|---
32 | 40 | 23 | 22 | 47
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Library as a Place
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Adequacy Gap Ratio for Library as a Place Questions
Comparison, Graduate Students, 2008 and 2011

Series 1 | Series 2
---|---
LP-1 | 16
LP-2 | -2
LP-3 | 37
LP-4 | 28
LP-5 | 55
Adequacy Gap Ratio for Library as a Place Questions
Undergraduates- Comparison, 2008 & 2011 $n=1157$
Library as a Place Questions
Comparison Faculty, 2008 and 2011

Series 1 = 2008
Series 2 = 2011

- Library space that inspires study and learning (LP-1)
- Quiet space for individual activities (LP-2)
- A comfortable and inviting location (LP-3)
- A gateway for study, learning, or research (LP-4)
- Community space for group learning and group (LP-5)
Adequacy Gap Ratio, by Dimension
All Users
2004-2011
The gate count increased dramatically

Typical gate count in the Fall 10,000 per day

Between September and late October, 2010 gate count exceeded 15,000 17 days of the month

Ten years ago, there were 47 visits per student per year

In 2010-2011 the number will be 72 visits per student per year
I love the new modifications to the library. It is really looking modernized and more spacious, allowing more students to access the library. The equipment is looking better (apple products and newer computers), and I feel like the overall experience has become much more reliable. I love and strongly rely on the Cabell library.
The new second floor is the best gift VCU has ever given its students. I use the library for group study mostly and without it I know my GPA would suffer.
CONCLUSION

- This essentially is Using LibQual to Solicit, Track, and Act Upon Users Opinions of service quality.
- That being said:

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

THANK YOU

QUESTIONS?