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Library Quality Assessment through LibQual (KEYNOTE TALK)

LibQUAL+® is an evaluation protocol that allows libraries to collect information about user perceptions and expectations and act on users' opinions so they can improve library services. The protocol has been implemented in more than 1,000 libraries collecting data from more than one million library users across the globe. The majority of the implementations have taken place in North American, US and Canada, yet a sizable group of libraries (more than 60) has participated since 2003 from the UK through a continuing collaboration between ARL and SCONUL. In 2007 the largest one-time country wide implementation outside the US took place in Canada with more than 60 libraries. It was also the largest number of bilingual (English and French) implementations supported through collaboration between ARL and CARL. LibQUAL+® implementations in Europe through the European Business School Librarians Group have provided experience with diverse national educational systems. In Africa, the protocol has been implemented in Africaans by almost all academic libraries in South Africa. Nine Australian institutions have implemented the protocol since 2004. In fall 2007 a group of libraries in Asia implemented the protocol in Chinese (traditional) through the Joint University Libraries Academic Consortium (JULAC) in Hong Kong. In 2008, the protocol was used by libraries in France and Belgium. This paper will examine differences and similarities of library service quality scores across these geographically diverse areas in perception scores. It will also present useful strategies institutions have adopted in maximizing the benefits of their LibQUAL+® implementation.

Martha Kyrillidou is Director of ARL Statistics and Service Quality Programs at ARL. She is responsible for all aspects of the Statistics and Assessment capability at ARL which offers assessment products and services to the library community ranging from descriptive statistics to evaluative tools focusing on service quality improvements in libraries. Martha provides analytical support to libraries and other program areas within the ARL office and has widely disseminated assessment developments through a rich publication record.