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ABSTRACT

A survey of a random sample of students from five tertiary institutions in Melbourne was conducted in 1986 to determine the nature and extent of their usage of their own university or college and other libraries. Questionnaires were mailed to 1,996 students, of whom 999 responded. The questionnaire sought information on: (1) students' backgrounds; (2) the types of libraries used; (3) the frequency of that usage; (4) the primary reasons for using academic and public libraries; (5) the resources and services used in these libraries; (6) the degree of satisfaction with services offered; and (7) the nature and extent of course-related usage of public libraries. Other comments were also solicited. A complex network of information sources used by students in fulfilling their course needs emerged from the study. Academic libraries were found to constitute the primary information source, with other sources, including public libraries, playing supplementary roles. It is noted that some of the traditional assumptions of the relative roles of different types of libraries are challenged by the data, and the final chapter explores some implications of these findings for planning library services in Victoria. Tabulated data are presented in 120 tables, and appendixes contain copies of the questionnaire and cover letter, a follow-up letter, additional cover letters, and respondents' comments. (82 references) (CGD)

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TERTIARY STUDENTS & LIBRARY USAGE

WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON PUBLIC LIBRARIES

A REPORT OF A 1986 MELBOURNE SURVEY

BY KERRY GROSSER

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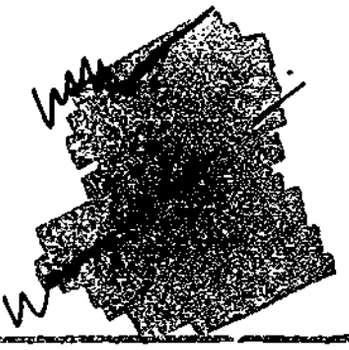

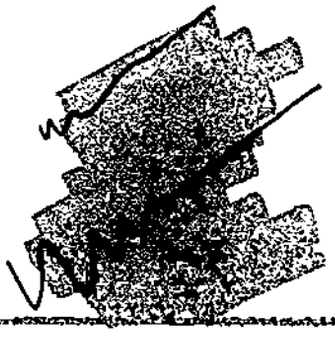
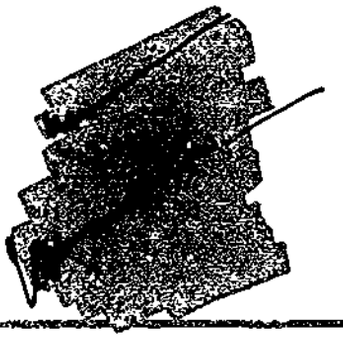

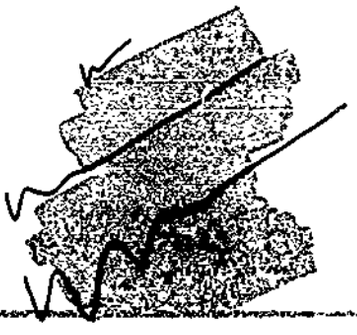
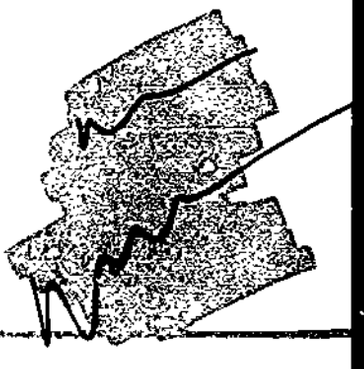

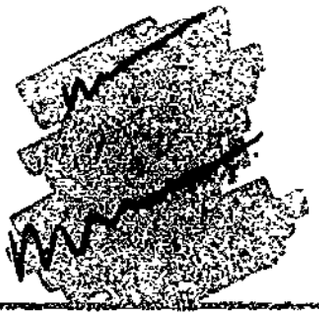
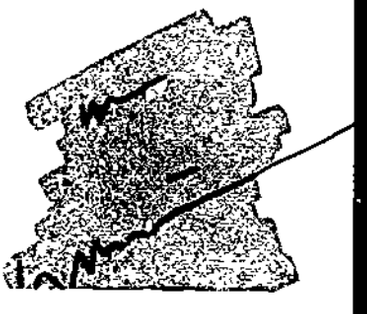

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Any large scale research project involves the cooperation of many parties. This survey would never have got off the ground without the help of the following people, for whose efforts I would like to express my sincere appreciation:

Fourth year students from the RMIT Department of Information Services 1986 Research Methods Class, for their diligence and enthusiasm in assisting with data collection and coding of questionnaires:

Jo Anne Bell
Fiona Drum
Katinka Emmer
Jane Fegan
Sarah Gauci
Michelle Leahy
John Lynch
Irene Owsianka
Vera Pohl
Carol Rickett
Helen Sweeny
Raylee Thitchener
Judith Tickner
Margaret Woolcock

Lyn Jones and the team from the RMIT Professional Keypunch Service, who made our lives much easier by inputting the lengthy numeric data file for the survey.

Members of the LAA University and College Libraries Section and the Public Libraries Section, Victorian Groups, and representatives from each of the institutions involved, with whom I consulted throughout the project, especially:

Rod Blacker (Public Libraries Section)
Max Borchardt (University and College Libraries Section)
Susan Bray (Melbourne College of Advanced Education)
John Rogan (Footscray Institute of Technology)
Helen Sweeny (Swinburne Institute of Technology)
Barry Martin and Ian Smith (University of Melbourne)
Earle Gow (La Trobe University)

The Registrars from each institution.

Miss Jean Hagger, former Head of the RMIT Department of Librarianship, whose encouragement and financial assistance has facilitated ongoing research within the Department.

My colleagues from the Department of Information Services, for their practical support and encouragement, especially during the writing up phase of the project.

My husband, Gavan, and children, Kim, Jade and Sian, without whose continuing support and endurance over the lengthy period of the research and the writing up of the Report, the whole project would never have reached completion.

Kerry Grosser

November 9, 1987

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November 9, 1987

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SYNOPSIS

This report presents the results of a 1986 survey of library usage habits of a random sample of tertiary students from five tertiary institutions in Melbourne. The major focus of the study was the nature and extent of tertiary students' usage of public libraries, but to put this into context, students' usage of their own university or college libraries and other libraries was also investigated.

The questionnaire focused on types of libraries used; the frequency of that usage; the primary reasons for using academic and public libraries; resources and services used in those libraries; degree of satisfaction with services offered; and the nature and extent of course related usage of public libraries.

In the analysis of results, the impact on library usage of the following variables was tested: institution attended; mode of study; level of course; year of course; field of subject specialisation; and age. Students' 'other comments' provided a wealth of background information on aspects of services in academic and public libraries; difficulties encountered in using those libraries; and suggestions for improving services.

The overall picture to emerge from the study was of a complex network of information sources used by students in fulfilling their course needs. While the student's own academic library constituted the primary information source, with most students frequent users of their own academic libraries, a range of other sources, including public libraries, played an important secondary, or supplementary role. Respondents as a group appeared highly versatile, resourceful, self-directed and purposive in their information seeking behaviour, readily able to locate alternative sources when faced with problems such as materials unavailability in their own tertiary institution libraries. Some of the traditional assumptions of the relative roles of different types of library are challenged by the data, especially the notion that the educational role of public libraries is somehow divorced from serving particular course needs. The final chapter explores some implications of findings for planning library services in Victoria.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Early in 1984, in an informal discussion, several Melbourne librarians reflected on the nature of the demands tertiary students were making on their public libraries. Each had anecdotes to recount of incidents involving tertiary students approaching their public libraries for specialised materials that should have been available through their own academic libraries. Did students have unrealistic expectations of their public libraries? Had they been adequately informed of the role of public libraries in the community, through user education programs in their own institutions' libraries? Were they making unreasonable demands and placing a heavy burden on the limited resources of public libraries? Were university and college libraries failing to provide adequate resources and services, forcing students to go elsewhere? For instance: Were there gaps in collections? Were materials needed by students constantly off the shelves? Were restricted loans periods, inadequate hours of opening, or overcrowded study areas, greatly inconveniencing students? Did students find library staff at their own tertiary institutions unapproachable? Or were there other personal reasons, such as a sense of being overwhelmed by the size and complexity of the collection, for why students were using public libraries in preference to their own university or college libraries?

On the occasion of a joint meeting of the Victorian groups of the Library Association of Australia Public Libraries Section and University and College Libraries Section in 1984, these concerns were translated into the following formal resolution:

> *'It was agreed that an investigation into the nature and extent of tertiary students' demands on public libraries was desirable, together with an assessment of the quality of service given to them.'* [1]

Perhaps each Section had its own hidden agenda in recommending such a study.

Over a year later, at the beginning of 1986, when seeking out a suitable research project for my Fourth Year Research Methods class, my attention was drawn to the 1984 resolution in a conversation with a colleague. As the topic seemed appropriate for a class project, subsequently negotiations were undertaken with members of both Sections on the possibility of conducting the investigation, with the assistance of Fourth Year students from RMIT Department of Information Services. This was agreed to, and financial support promised by the two Sections, each having received grants from LAA Headquarters for the project.

Further discussions revealed two quite different expectations of the research. Members of the Public Libraries Section were keen to experiment with a telephone survey, and to broaden the scope of the project to include students at all levels, while those from the University and College Libraries Section wished to proceed with an investigation along the lines of the original resolution, specifically targetting tertiary students.

Finally, it was decided to attempt both, and to tackle the research along two fronts:

(1) A telephone survey to a random sample of households in the Melbourne metropolitan area; and

(2) A mail questionnaire to a random sample of students from tertiary institutions in Melbourne.

This research report documents the findings of the latter survey. Results of the telephone survey are given in a separate report.

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[1] Reported in *Australian academic and research libraries*, vol. 16, no. 2, June 1985, p. 112.

1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim

Based on the original PLS / UCLS resolution, the broad aim of the research was to determine *'the nature and extent of tertiary students' demands on public libraries . . . together with an assessment of the quality of library service given to them.'*

The project was undertaken primarily as a 'fact gathering' exercise - to document tertiary students' library usage habits; their perceptions of the roles of different libraries they used; and their evaluations of the relative quality of library services in their own university or college libraries and public libraries. This implied a descriptive, not an analytical survey. Rather than formally testing a limited number of operational hypotheses, the study was designed to gather a range of pertinent information, and, through extensive crosstabulations of relevant variables, to identify any distinctive patterns or trends emerging from the data.

Objectives

From the broad aim, a series of more specific objectives was derived. These clustered around three areas: overall library usage habits; usage of the student's own university or college library; and usage of the public library.

(1) Overall library usage habits

To determine:

(a) which types of libraries tertiary students use; and

(b) how often they use each type of library.

(2) Usage of the student's own university or college library

To determine:

(a) the main purposes for which university and college libraries are used by students:

(b) the relative degree of use of particular resources, services and facilities in university and college libraries;

(c) the degree of satisfaction with services in university and college libraries, especially materials provision; materials availability ; user education; staff assistance; study areas; and provision for interlibrary loans;

(d) the extent of awareness of, and use of, reciprocal borrowing provisions.

(3) Usage of the public library

To determine:

(a) the incidence of public library membership amongst tertiary students;

(b) the main purposes for which public libraries are used by tertiary students, and particularly the amount and extent of course related public library usage;

(c) the reasons why some students use public libraries for course related purposes;

(d) the relative degree of use by tertiary students of particular resources, services and facilities in public libraries;

(e) ratings of both the overall quality of service in public libraries, and the quality of particular service areas, and comparative ratings of services in public libraries and university libraries.

(f) how prepared public library staff are to help tertiary students.

As well as recording frequencies data for each of the points listed above, the study sought to explore the impact of the following factors on respondents' answers:

- institution attended (university vs. college)
- mode of study and enrolment status (full time vs. part time; internal vs. external)
- level of course (undergraduate vs. postgraduate; first level course vs. higher degree)
- year of course (first, second, third , fourth, fifth or sixth)
- age
- field of subject specialisation

1.3 ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

In focusing on these objectives, the researcher expected to find:

(1) That most tertiary students would be frequent users of their own university or college libraries, and would make only limited and infrequent use of other types of libraries.

(2) That the size and level of resourcing of the student's own university or college library would have a significant impact on usage of other types of library, i.e. students from institutions with larger, better resourced libraries would be less likely to use other libraries than those from smaller, poorly resourced institutions.

(3) That externally enrolled students would be much greater users of other types of libraries, including public libraries, than internally enrolled students.

(4) That part timers would use other libraries, including public libraries, more than would full timers.

(5) That the amount and frequency of usage of university or college libraries would increase with each additional year of course, and with increasing level of course, but that usage of public libraries would decrease, owing to the lack of suitable materials for more advanced study.

(6) That age would have no significant impact on tertiary students' library usage habits.

(7) That library usage for all types of library would be greater by students specialising in the more literary subjects, the 'soft sciences', than by those majoring in the 'hard sciences'.

(8) That despite recent technological innovations, and the wider range of formats of materials found in libraries today, students would still be using libraries primarily for book loans.

(9) That usage of the student's own university or college library would be overwhelmingly course related, with negligible usage of tertiary library collections for recreational or other purposes.

(10) That tertiary students would be generally satisfied with services offered in their own university or college libraries.

(11) That relatively few students would utilise reciprocal borrowing provisions with other tertiary institution libraries.

(12) That the incidence of public library membership amongst tertiary students would be slightly higher than the State average, supporting the observation of most library user studies that usage increases with higher educational levels.

(13) That public libraries would be used by tertiary students primarily for recreational and general interest purposes, and only to a very limited extent for study needs.

(14) That tertiary students who use public libraries for course related purposes would derive from them only a very small proportion of their total study materials.

(15) That tertiary students using public libraries for course related purposes would be mainly undergraduates in the first year of their courses, as most public library collections are not likely to be able to support more advanced study.

(16) That tertiary students would use public libraries for course related purposes as a last resort, when their own university or college libraries failed them. Prevailing conditions in tertiary libraries such as the following would contribute to this usage:

- insufficient duplication of high demand titles;
- very limited loans periods;
- inability of many students to procure interlibrary loans;
- inadequate user education;
- overcrowding;
- limited hours of opening, especially at weekends;
- the relative inaccessibility of the university or college library outside times when the student attends classes.

(17) That other psychological factors would also contribute to tertiary students' course related public library usage, e.g. a sense of being overwhelmed by the sheer size and complexity of the university or college library collection.

(18) That tertiary students would rate highly aspects of public library service related to the provision of recreational and general interest materials, but would rate negatively aspects related to the provision of materials for course related needs, which would suffer greatly in comparison with the much better endowed tertiary library collections.

1.4 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The fairly wide ranging topical scope of the research has been outlined in Section 1.2: tertiary students' library usage habits, with particular emphasis on usage of their own university or college libraries and public libraries. It was the aim of the study to identify broad trends and patterns in library usage amongst a representative sample of tertiary students in Melbourne. More focused research at the individual library level (both university /college libraries and public libraries) is needed to provide more specific data, and to test the validity of some of the general trends identified in this report. Also, as the project was limited to Melbourne, similar investigations in other locations are desirable, to determine if trends identified here are more widely generalisable. For instance, in Sydney, where the Subject Specialisation Scheme amongst public libraries is highly developed[2], students' course related usage of public libraries may follow different patterns. The same may be true of rural areas and provincial cities where students have limited access to library resources other than those of their own institutions.

Constraints of time and resources placed some inevitable limitations on the value of the study. As the project from conception through implementation was restricted to about six weeks, due to heavy workload and academic timetabling requirements, there was some skimping on the 'pilot' phase, with comments on the questionnaire being restricted to input from professional colleagues and research methods students. A full scale pretest on a random sample of tertiary students would, no doubt, have highlighted difficulties with a few questions, and would have obviated some problems subsequently experienced in data analysis. Nevertheless, within the context of the whole project, these problems were relatively minor, and did not affect greatly overall conclusions.

1.5 SOME DEFINITIONS

Tertiary library or **Academic library** - used interchangeably with 'university or college library'.

Interlibrary loan - a loan, made on behalf of a client, which is sent from one library to another library, generally due to lack of ownership or non-availability of the item in the client's own library.

Reciprocal borrowing scheme - a scheme whereby tertiary students can borrow, in person, from libraries of tertiary institutions other than their own.

External student or **Off campus student** - used interchangeably throughout to refer to a student enrolled in external mode at a tertiary institution.

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[2] The Melbourne Subject Specialisation Scheme developed in the 1960s and 1970s has waned over the years, and is now virtually defunct. Recently at a meeting of public librarians, a vote was taken in favour of discontinuing the scheme, due to current severe resource constraints.

CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The impetus for this research came from the pragmatic concerns of practitioners rather than as an outgrowth of theoretical issues.

An online literature search of the LISA and ERIC databases on DIALOG, and APAIS, AEI and ANB databases on AUSINET on student usage of public libraries revealed no comparable research over recent years - only one relevant study dating back to the 1960s, and a considerable amount of literature on several peripherally related themes. Since 1970, the major preoccupation of the British literature in this area has been the role and experience of public libraries in serving Open University students and other adult learners; and of the U.S. literature, the results of several adult independent learning projects and their implications for public libraries. As well, there is an ongoing body of literature comprising professional comment and policy statements on the role of public libraries in the educational process. Most of the Australian literature reflects similar concerns. In the review, each of these themes will be addressed, before focusing on more parochial issues pertaining to the Victorian public library scene.

2.2 THE ROLE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

Since the earliest days of the public library movement in Britain, the U.S., Australia and other countries, the educational role of public libraries has been well established. Associated with moves for universal education from the late 19th Century, public libraries came to be seen as a potential vehicle for upward social mobility through self education and moral enlightenment. No historical analysis of the concept of the educational role of public libraries will be attempted here. For those wishing to explore that area, the1978 Bingley publication entitled *Public library purpose: a reader* [1] will provide a useful starting point, from the British perspective. A similar U.S. treatment is contained in Birge's book *Serving adult learners*[2]. Suffice it to say, that traditionally statements of public library goals have incorporated three major areas: recreation, information and education, to which are sometimes added other functions such as 'promoting social and cultural awareness'.

Nowhere has the educational role of public libraries been more strongly and succinctly expressed than in the 1949 Unesco *Public library manifesto* [3]. Some extracts follow :

> *'This manifesto . . . proclaims Unesco's belief in the public library as a living force for popular education, and for the growth of international understanding . . . .'*
>
> *'The public library is a product of modern democracy's faith in universal education as a life-long process.*
>
> *'Though primarily intended to serve the educational needs of adults, the public library should also supplement the work of schools in developing the reading tastes of children and young people, helping them to become adults who can use books with appreciation and profit.'*

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1 *Public library purpose: a reader*, edited by Barry Totterdell, Bingley, London, 1978.
2 Lynn E. Birge, *Serving adult learners: a public library tradition*, ALA, Chicago, 1981.
3 Unesco, 'Public library manifesto', *Unesco bulletin for libraries*, vol. 3, no. 7, July 1949, pp. 242, 244.

' The public library should offer children, young people, men and women, opportunity and encouragement:

To educate themselves continuously
To keep abreast of progress in all fields of knowledge . . . .
To aid generally in the advancement of knowledge. . . .'

'The public library should link its activities with the work of other educational, cultural and social agencies - the schools, universities, museums, labour unions, study clubs, adult education groups, etc.'

'With a well trained, resourceful and imaginative staff, an adequate budget and public support, a public library can become what it should be - a university of the people offering a liberal education to all comers.

'Citizens of a democracy have need of such opportunities for self-education at all times. The complexity and instability of life today make the need an urgent one.'

However, such lofty rhetoric ignores the grim realities of the late 20th Century economic climate. With a rapidly shrinking resource base, public libraries cannot be 'all things to all people', but they must determine 'what they will be and to whom', an argument presented by Berelson almost forty years ago[4].

An article by Beckerman[5] raised the issue of conflict inherent in the educational goals of public libraries. He wrote:

> *'Public libraries . . . like to think of themselves as noncurriculum oriented institutions, divorced from the responsibility of directly supporting the teaching programs of formal educational institutions within a community.'* [6]

Yet, he claimed, public libraries all do support the curriculum to some extent - e.g. a 1970 survey by De Prospo et al had revealed from c.36% - 53% of all public library users were students. Beckerman hinted that this goal clash was attributable to divergent value systems of public librarians and library patrons. Perhaps this can be put more simply as a conflict between the **ideal** and the **reality**. Public librarians may define their educational role in broad, general terms, divorced from the support of specific, formal educational programs, but, it seems, students view the role of public libraries very differently - as a definite source of curriculum materials. The fact that students account for very high proportions of library usage and library registrations in most public libraries would suggest that public libraries are being extensively used to support formal educational programs.

Certainly, some writers, with a classificationist's desire for order, have attempted to identify precise lines of demarcation between the educational functions of public libraries and libraries of educational institutions. For example, Trask's 1970 article[7] described the role of the school library as providing particular curriculum related materials to support the school's learning programs, i.e. the school library 's functions are **selective, specific** and **intensive**, meeting the needs of one agency. On the other hand, public library services to children are **inclusive, general and extensive**, i.e. unrelated to any formal educational program, catering for a wide range of recreational and informational needs, aiming to provide enrichment in the wide range of topics of interest to children of all ages and abilities. While, in theory, this dichotomy appears clear cut and reasonable, in practice things have rarely been so simple.

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4 B. Berelson, *The library's public*, Columbia Press, New York, 1949.
5 Edwin P. Beckerman, 'Impact of the Open University on public libraries', *Drexel library quarterly*, vol. 11, no. 2, Apr. 1975, pp. 34 -53.
6 ibid., p. 36
7 Margaret Trask, 'Selective and inclusive: library service to the child', *The Australian library journal*, vol. 19, no. 8, Sept. 1970, pp. 275-281.

Review of the literature

Though the extent of student usage of public libraries has long been a bone of contention with many public librarians, there appears to be virtually no recent research into the topic. How much do students use public libraries? And for what purposes? Is there any substantial course related usage, or is student usage of public libraries purely for recreational and general interest purposes? The literature available provided few definite answers to such questions. Certainly, there are some subjective personal reflections, but there is very little objective data available. There was one relevant survey located, but it was published 25 years ago.

Haas[8], in 1960, in response to rumours about the 'college student problem' from public librarians in New York City, conducted a survey which aimed '*to determine in detail the amount and nature of the use which higher education students make of New York libraries to supplement the library resources provided at their own schools.*' [9] A one in forty random sample of currently enrolled full time and part time tertiary students yielded a sample of 5,000, of whom two thirds responded. Haas regarded this high response rate as '*strong evidence of the active interest students have in the library resources available to them.*' [10] Several of the findings of this survey are of some interest and relevance to the current investigation. Haas found the tertiary students used other libraries extensively to supplement resources of their own institutions:

- 80% of the tertiary students had used a public library at least once in the previous year. Usage by students from specialist colleges, e.g. medical,scientific, music or theological colleges, was slightly lower, but still over two thirds of respondents.

- Many students used several public libraries, 'migrating' between different libraries according to their collection strengths.

- About 5% used libraries of other academic institutions; and 5% used other non-academic libraries (predominantly special libraries).

- Frequency of public library usage did not show any significant correlation with employment status or course load. However, it did with academic level of the student. Undergraduates tended to use public libraries less often than did advanced degree students

- Subject field had a moderate but distinct effect on public library usage, with higher rates of usage in the fields of liberal arts and education.

- The relative collection size of the student's own academic library, and his/her personal evaluation of that collection, had a substantial influence on his/her use of other libraries, i.e. those considering their own institutions' library resources as 'inadequate' were much more likely than other respondents to use other libraries.

- The main reasons cited for dissatisfaction with one's own academic library were:
  too few books;
  a shortage of up to date books;
  too few copies of titles in heavy demand.

- Approximately two thirds of respondents who used public libraries, reported doing so to supplement resources of their own institutions.

- Convenience was a major stimulant of 'other' library use - students were 'supremely practical', using the closest accessible libraries.

  Hours of opening, especially weekend and vacation hours, had some impact on 'other' library use, particularly for those working full time.

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[8] Warren J. Haas, 'Student use of New York's libraries', *Library trends*, vol. 10, no. 4, Apr. 1962, pp. 529-540.
9 Ibid., p. 529
10 ibid.

Based on these insights into the magnitude of public library usage by tertiary students in New York City, Haas recommended the establishment of several high quality, supplementary academic libraries specifically designed for students, administered by the regional reference and research library system, with collections of around 200,000 volumes, and seating for about 1,000 readers.

One Australian project focusing on a broader theme - measures of adequacy for library collections in Australian colleges - but which contained one study of relevance to the current research was Wainwright and Dean's [11]work dating from the mid-1970s. Volume 1, chapter 8, reports on an investigation into sources of study materials used by students from several Australian colleges: WAIT (Western Australian Institute of Technology); SAIT (South Australian I T); and four Victorian colleges - RMIT, Lincoln Institute, Bendigo I T and Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education. Students from six undergraduate courses (accountancy, architecture, chemistry, mechanical engineering, physiotherapy and social sciences) were surveyed about sources of materials used in their study. Two complementary techniques were used. A brief critical incident survey, completed by all members of selected classes in compulsory units at each stage of the course, provided data on a particular information seeking incidents. This approach generated 2,778 usable returns. More extensive information was derived through a diary technique, whereby students recorded for a week items they sought and used for the core subject. 59% of diary forms handed out were returned - 1,646 responses. Collectively, this data provided valuable insights into college students' information seeking habits. Some of the general conclusions of the research are summarised below:

- Teaching methods adopted in each subject were found to have a great influence on sources used by students.

- Where relatively few sources were used in a subject, personal sources (textbooks, etc.) constituted the major source of supply of study materials. However, as the number of items used rose, the proportion of materials supplied by libraries rose, and personal sources declined, as a proportion of overall materials used.

- Those who used libraries most also tended to be those who spread usage across several libraries, not only their own college libraries. However, with a very specialised course such as physiotherapy at Lincoln Institute, fewer libraries other than the student's own college library were used as sources of study materials - presumably as there were few suitable alternative libraries which could serve as sources of course materials.

- With students from the two colleges in rural areas, there was a much lower incidence of usage of libraries other than the college library - undoubtedly because there were fewer (if any) suitable alternative libraries than those available to students in the metropolitan area.

- It was found in metropolitan colleges that c. 10% - 25% of study materials procured from libraries came from libraries other than the student's own college library, c.f. less than 5% in the rural colleges. Studies cited in the Literature Review [12]revealed c. 10% - 30% of students from metropolitan universities and colleges regularly use libraries other than those of their own institutions in connexion with their studies, for five main reasons:

    (1) Convenience, i.e physical proximity - to work, home, travel routes, etc.

    (2) Longer opening hours.

    (3) Better study facilities / conditions.

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[11] E.J. Wainwright & J.E. Dean. *Measures of adequacy for library collections in Australian colleges of advanced education: report of a research project*, WAIT, Perth, Oct. 1976 (2 vols.).

[12] ibid., vol. 2, pp. 61-62.

(4) Previous experience / success in finding materials.

(5) Failure to locate required materials in one's own tertiary library (generally due either to materials unavailability or to the student's lack of knowledge of how to find materials, i.e. inadequate user education).

- Primary reasons cited for using sources other than the college library were stock deficiency and convenience factors.

On the basis of data obtained, Wainwright and Dean recommended that rural colleges receive an additional isolation allowance to compensate for the lack of adequate alternative library resources. Based on this and other studies, the authors made a number of other recommendations, including:

- That interlibrary loans be available to all members of a college, and not restricted by class of borrower, i.e. they felt there was no justification for denying the majority of college library users (undergraduate students) access to interlibrary loans. The practical realities of slow supply times, Wainwright and Dean argued, would mean that an overwhelming demand for this service was unlikely.[13]

  Over the past decade, this recommendation seems to have been widely implemented in Australian colleges, but not in the universities, where undergraduates are usually excluded from interlibrary loans privileges - on the basis that the university library should be able to service all undergraduates' basic study needs.

- That a reciprocal borrowing scheme amongst Australian college and university libraries be investigated. The authors regarded this as of greater potential impact than their recommendation on extending interlibrary loans privileges, given the existing amount of inhouse usage of other academic libraries by college students.

  Again, there has been action on this recommendation since the appearance of Wainwright and Dean's report, with most Australian tertiary institutions participating in a reciprocal borrowing scheme, which, despite complaints of an excessive amount of 'red tape' involved, has undoubtedly benefited many Australian tertiary students.

- That further study be conducted into the best possible means of providing external students access to materials they require, e.g. longer borrowing periods. Based on experiences of institutions in other countries in this area , Wainwright and Dean warned *'that the provision of library services to external students, if carried out adequately, is both expensive and difficult.'* [14]

  As reported in Section 2.5, considerable progress has been made in the area of improving services to external students in Australia over the past decade.

Another part of Wainwright and Dean's book of relevance to the current research is their excellent review of the literature. From their review , the authors located several studies which *'suggested that the searcher for information tends to act in such a way as to minimise the amount of effort involved in obtaining the information necessary to carry out the task confronting him, in an adequate (not necessarily the best) manner.'* [15] That is, students with a continuing flow of study tasks, and with a limited time period to complete those tasks, select sources of materials for course requirements largely on the basis of accessibility and convenience, and on the perceived likelihood of the source containing the material required.

13 ibid., vol. 1, p. 224.
14 ibid., vol. 1, p. 261.
15 ibid, vol. 1, p. 187.

When the college library fulfills these criteria, it will be used; when it does not, other sources will be prefered. Hence, the authors argued, the desirable level of provision of materials in a college library will be affected by the existence of readily accessible alternative sources of materials required by students and staff. So even if a college library is wholly adequate in its ability to supply materials, college students would still procure materials from other sources, because they find it convenient to do so.

From the viewpoint of the current research, the section on factors affecting library usage amonsgt tertiary students is of particular relevance. Some of the factors they list, extracted from a wide range of user surveys and item availability studies, include:

- **Characteristics of students** - IQ; previous academic success; social and demographic background; etc.

- **Course characteristics** - with courses in some fields accounting for much higher proportions of library usage generally ,and library circulation in particular, than do others. Some studies have shown that courses with high student contact hours (especially practical / laboratory sessions) tend to yield lower rates of library usage than do courses with fewer contact hours. Another course related factor is level of study, with most surveys finding the higher the level of the student, the greater the amount of library usage.

- **Teaching methods** - the attitude of the individual lecturer is perhaps the most decisive factor in determining the extent of library usage amongst students. i.e. whether s/he expects students to demonstrate a high library usage rate.

- **Mode of study** - *'Studies have indicated that part-time students use the library less than corresponding full-time students, even allowing for the fact that they are studying fewer course units at any given time.* '[16] Wainwright and Dean speculated that this trend may be largely attributable to inadequate library opening hours in tertiary institutions, which are biased towards serving full time students; and to the fact that part time students are more likely to have access to alternative sources of study materials (e.g. libraries of their employing organisations) than do full time students.

- **Characteristics of individual colleges and college libraries** - e.g.geographical location; architectural features; availability of seating; 'atmosphere'; variations in loan period; policies; etc.

- **Collection characteristics** - both the level of acquisition within one's field; and also the obsolescence rate. Obviously one of the most important factors affecting usage of one's own university or college library c.f. usage of alternative sources of information.

The current research will focus on many of these factors in connexion with relative extent of usage of students' own university or college libraries, and other types of libraries, including public libraries. As explored in the surveys just discussed, students' usage of 'other' libraries for course related purposes is determined largely by the extent of their usage of, and their attitudes towards, their own academic libraries. There is a considerable volume of literature on student usage of academic libraries, most of which are surveys of individual libraries. While no systematic attempt has been made here to survey this literature, a few articles are of some interest in this context.

At the attitudinal level, one factor discouraging students' usage of their own institutional libraries, is the psychological barrier which can exist between the student and the librarian. Kosa[17], in a 1982 article reported on a research project exploring this phenomenon at Victoria College, Burwood Campus. Many students, he claimed, are reluctant to ask library staff for help when needed, which means both that much of the library 's user services budget

16 ibid., vol. 2, p. 57.

17 Geza A. Kosa, 'The psychological barrier between college students and the librarian', *Australian academic & research libraries*, vol 13, no. 2, June 1982, pp. 107-112.

is considerably underutilised, and that many tertiary students are not using library resources as effectively as they might. Kosa's interest in the topic was triggered by results of some previous studies, including a 1973 University of Queensland study conducted by Roe and Biggs which had demonstrated that more than half of the tertiary students interviewed did not seek help from library staff, nor did they use materials staff had prepared to help them. Rather, they learned to use the library through a process of personal trial and error, or by seeking help from friends.

Kosa's research involved the distribution of questionnaires to students in class. 1,021 completed questionnaires were returned, a 55% response rate. Of undergraduate students, 49% said they usually hesitated in asking reference librarians for help. With post-basic teaching courses, this rate dropped to 31% -32% of respondents, which would suggest that, with maturation, students become more self-assured, and less inhibited in seeking help. A 1963 Southhampton University study Kosa refered to had yielded similar results, with each additional year of tertiary study showing a decline in student reluctance to put queries to library staff (44% of First Year students confessing reluctance, c.f. 39% of Second Years and 33% of Third Years).

Overall, Kosa found, when students could not find information, 32.7% would turn first to the librarian at the information desk; 18.8% to staff on the loans desk; 31.3% to a friend; 10.2% to a lecturer; and that 4.5% would give up; 2.5% gave 'other' options. Amongst undergraduates, however, only 27% would turn first to a reference librarian; but 39% to a friend. Reasons respondents gave for hesitation in asking questions were as follows:

Question may appear too trivial 24.4%

Librarian is too busy 22.1%

Reference librarian is intimidating 16.7%

Does not wish to appear ignorant 16.7%

Does not know whom to ask 15.5%

Other reasons 4.6%

Possible ways of addressing this problem, Kosa suggested, include devising more effective user education programs; altering the physical set up of the reference area; and discouraging librarians from performing other tasks whilst at the reference desk, which can be a deterrent to a student wishing to ask a question.

The phenomenon of the psychological barrier between library staff and library users was investigated further by Hatchard and Toy [18], who interviewed 94 students and 20 academic staff members from six tertiary institutions in Victoria. A little more than one third of students interviewed experienced emotional problems (tension, unease) when approaching library staff for help. Reasons given included:

'I don't want to appear stupid.'

'I don't want to bother a busy librarian.'

'I don't know library staff well, so I'm unsure how they'll react to me.'

'I don't really know the question I want to ask.'

Subsequent questioning revealed more about these fears. With most, it was a matter of shyness and lack of self-confidence, a reluctance to approach any 'authority' figure for help, a

[18] Desmond B. Hatchard & Phyllis Toy, 'The psychological barriers between library users and library staff: an exploratory investigation', *Australian academic & research libraries*, vol. 17, no. 2, June 1986, pp. 63 - 69.

'normal' apprehension of meeting strangers, a failure to get to know library staff. With increasing familiarity, such 'natural' fears tended to subside. One respondent said: *'I feel intimidated or apprehensive when dealing with authority figures because I may be wasting their valuable time'*; another: *'I have a fear of appearing foolish or stupid in case I'm asking an obvious question or a question the answer to which I have already been told but have forgotten'.* Another comment related the apprehension more to the characteristics of the person being approached: *'It depends upon my perception of the person. If the person is smiling or looks friendly, then I will approach, otherwise I will not'.* On the basis of their interviews, the researchers commented: *'Some library personnel are seen as being aloof, unapproachable and authoritarian - these are avoided by the users.'*[19] Personal qualities interviewees considered important for library staff were friendliness; approachability; an ability to make users feel comfortable and at ease; helpfulness; patience; and effective communication skills.

Tony Mays[20] in a study based on a correlation between 1981 circulation history data of full time, on campus, first year students from Deakin University and a subsequent questionnaire mailed to the same group found that:

(1) The assumption that library services play a central role of in the lives of the majority of undergraduate students was inaccurate, with most first year students 'getting by ', and some even doing very well academically, with minimal usage of their University Library.

(2) The most important function of the University Library was as a 'study hall', with approximately two thirds of students' time spent in the Library devoted to activities in no way related to usage of the collection.

(3) There was a substantial correlation between extent of borrowing and academic success for male students, but less so for females; and that students who started their courses at an older age (21 - 25 years) borrowed more and performed better academically than those who started their courses when they were younger.

(4) Discipline alone was an insufficient predictor of level of library usage. Contrary to traditional preconceptions, the level of borrowing for humanities and education students at Deakin was amongst the lowest for the University.

Mays believed the construction and conduct of individual courses to be the greatest influence of any factor on students' library usage. He concluded:*'This study confirms the findings of many previous studies in saying that, under many of the existing teaching practices, the needs of undergraduates for library provision . . . are not g.eat.'* [21] However, it could be possible that many first year students who show up as being non-borrowers or low borrowers in circulation records of their university or college library may in fact be using library facilities elsewhere. The current research should provide some preliminary indicators on this point.

One older (1964) study of the recreational reading of University of Sydney students, by Radford [22] analysed sources of supply of students' recreational reading. Personal purchases ranked highest (2,125 mentions), followed by the University Library (1,517), and the local public library (1,156). Other lower ranking sources included borrowing from friends, the City of Sydney Public Library and the Public Library of New South Wales. Radford reflected on the additional strain placed on the University Library by the considerable volume of students' recreational reading, no doubt due to the 'convenience' factor. About local public libraries, he wrote:

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19 ibid., p. 67.

20 Tony Mays, 'Do undergraduates need their libraries?', *Australian academic & research libraries*, vol. 17, no. 2, June 1986, pp. 51-62.

21 ibid., p. 61.

22 Neil A. Radford, 'The recreational reading of university students', *The Australian library journal*, vol. 14, no. 3, Sept. 1965, pp. 146 - 150.

> *'It is not surprising to find that local public libraries are relatively important as a source of recreational reading matter. They score so highly because not only are they conveniently located near shopping centres and public transport, etc., but their bookstocks are much more "recreationally directed:" than the university library, and their lending policies are usually generous.'*[23]

Another branch of the literature on the educational role of public libraries is that on user education in public libraries such as Breivik's 1982 book[24]. Breivik admitted that school and tertiary libraries have had more clearly defined instructional roles than have public libraries, but argued that public libraries with their growing involvement with nontraditional 'lifelong' education also have a definite educational role. Her book was written with the conviction that public librarians have increasing need for training in instructional methods.

While relatively little has been written specifically on the nature and extent of usage of public libraries by students enrolled in traditional courses in tertiary institutions, there is a considerable body of literature on the role of public libraries in nontraditional education, in particular, students enrolled in 'open university ' type programs, or as external students in formal courses; and adult independent learners. This usage is explored in Sections 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5.

2.3 OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, ADULT LEARNERS AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN BRITAIN

The establishment of the Open University saw the dawning of a new era in adult education in Britain. Courses were first offered in 1971, enabling adults without formal university entrance qualifications to work towards obtaining a university degree. The first year of these courses served a bridging function. Offered in external mode, innovative teaching methods were used - television and radio lectures with correspondence materials. Local study centres with viewing and listening facilities, tutors and discussion groups, mushroomed around the country. Over the years, the Open University has built up a considerable range of high quality learning materials which have been used not only in Britain, but around the world. Through this means, many who would otherwise have been excluded from tertiary education, have been able to obtain tertiary qualifications.

In this process, it was anticipated that public libraries would assume a key educational role, providing relevant materials, staff assistance, and instruction in the use of resources. However, the initial impact of the Open University in public libraries was much less than anticipated, as Wilson[25] and Gains [26]reported in two separate articles. After purchasing a wide range of Open University set texts, public librarians were disappointed in the low incidence of borrowing from Open University students. One early survey had shown minimal public library usage by Open University students. This was followed up by further investigations by Masterton and Wilson in 1975, and by Gains and Wilson in 1976. These studies concluded that Foundation Year and Second Year undergraduate students made relatively little use of public libraries, relying primarily on their own paperback texts and course materials, but that Third and Fourth Year students used them much more extensively, as more individual and research work was required by students at these levels. From this research, it would appear that teaching methods and course requirements have a substantial impact on student library usage habits.

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23 ibid., p. 149.

24 Patricia Senn Breivik, *Planning the library instruction program*, ALA, Chicago, 1982.

25 T. D. Wilson, 'Learning at a distance and library use: Open University students and libraries', *Libri*, vol. 28, no. 4, 1978, pp. 270 - 282.

26 Derek Gains, 'The Open University , continuing education and adults learning: notes toward the definition of a role for library services',*Education libraries bulletin*, vol. 26, part I, Spring 1983, pp. 14 - 27.

These studies also highlighted problems experienced by Open University students in using public libraries. Principal difficulties were inadequate stock and limited opening hours (most students having jobs). Lesser problems included delays in procuring reservations and interlibrary loans; uninformed or unhelpful staff; and difficulties of access to materials through poor cataloguing. Major needs identified were for regional centres to provide accurate and up to date information about libraries in their region - collection strengths, policies, hours of opening, etc.; for longer opening hours; for improvements in bookstock; for enhancing access to materials through efficient cataloguing and guiding systems. guides to the literature, and adequate staff assistance; and for public library staff to be better informed on the needs of Open University students.

Since 1976, many of these suggestions have been takenup - 'Library Liaison' personnel have been employed in regional offices, and maintain guides to local libraries, archives and records offices in each region; many guides to the literature have been compiled; many public librarians assist students with basic research skills (e.g. conducting a literature search); some public libraries provide off air video replay facilities for for students; and some remote interactive computer terminals have been installed in public libraries. Services introduced primarily for Open University students are being increasingly used by other adult and continuing education schemes, and by adult independent learners generally. According to Gains[27], there has been a marked shift in focus from institutional learning to the individual adult learner; he challenged public librarians to become more involved in providing support services for adult independent learners, to work as '*partners in collaborative educational ventures* '.

Similar sentiments have been echoed in several other articles. A November 1976 article in *Library Association record* entitled 'Adult education: rigid divisions breaking down'[28] explored the common interests of libraries and adult education bodies, and suggested practical ways in which public librarians could assist in the process of adult education. Some of the means suggested were:

- maintaining complete files of adult education activities within the region;
- displaying prominently relevant posters, leaflets and other publicity material;
- providing an advisory service for actual or potential adult learners, staffed by both librarians and adult education personnel;
- handling applications for enrolment in adult education classes;
- providing individualised or group instruction for adult education tutors on the selection and usage of relevant sources, trends in reading and the like;
- compiling study guides;
- arranging book displays either in the library or in buildings used for adult education classes, tailored to particular courses and levels of student;
- sending book boxes of relevant materials on bulk loan to adult education classes;
- compiling directories of subject strengths of different libraries within the region;
- encouraging library usage by making libraries welcoming and attractive places, and minimising bureaucratic processes; and
- making available library meeting rooms for adult education classes and discussion groups.

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27 ibid., pp. 24 -25.

28 'Adult education: rigid divisions breaking down', *Library Association record*, vol. 78, no. 11, Nov. 1976, pp. 532 - 534.

Joint collaborative activites suggested included:

- staff training sessions comprising adult educators and librarians;
- liaison personnel appointed to attend meetings of the other group;
- joint publications and research projects;
- joint use buildings; and
- joint promotion and publicity.

In the *Assistant librarian*, 1980, Drodge[29] convincingly argued the case for public libraries adopting a key role in nontraditional education. With many adults having had negative experiences with the formal educational system, Drodge saw libraries as having the distinct advantage of being in a position to '*present learning opportunities which do not smack of the school room*' [30], where the adult learner can be entirely self-directed, choose freely and proceed, at his / her own pace in a relaxed, unpressured, informal atmosphere. In a follow up article published three years later[31], Drodge explored further implications for public libraries of the recent developments in open learning. These comprised three main categories of service provision:

- information on educational opportunities, e.g. using a word processor to produce a subject index of adult education courses within a region, or utilising videotex systems to a similar end;
- provision of appropriate learning materials;
- educational advice/ counselling

In order for public librarians to take a more active role in nontraditional education, Drodge urged the development of staff training courses addressing these aspects of service provision for adult learners.

A different perspective on public librarians' involvement with adult learners was taken by Drodge in his report on a Delphi study involving librarians and adult educators[32]. Consensus views derived from the study predicted moderate increases in public library involvement in the area. To quote from the abstract to his article:

> *' Libraries are expected to work more closely with adult education agencies, providing information about opportunities and back -up materials for study in all media.. Some librarians will provide guidance and counselling. Access to academic library facilities will be easier for unregistered students. It is suggested that the predictions imply a structure of first contact through a public library with referral of learners to local academic libraries.'* [33]

29 Stephen Drodge, 'Libraries, open learning and adult educalion', *Assistant librarian*, vol. 73, no. 1, Jan. 1980, pp. 10 - 13.
30 ibid., p. 310.
31 Stephen Drodge, 'Open learning and libraries', *Assistant librarian*, vol. 76, no. 10, Oct. 1983, pp. 144 - 145.
32 Stephen Drodge, 'Libraries and adult learners: future developments', *Journal of librarianship*, vol. 16, no. 3, July 1984, pp. 170 - 187.
33 ibid., p. 170.

Perhaps the most thorough treatment of the role of public libraries in the adult education process emanating from the U.K. is Allred and Hay 's book [34], published in 1979. This research involved two main areas:

(1) a literature review which culminated in an extensive annotated bibliography of relevant sources; and

(2) a survey of current and planned activities of British public libraries in the area of adult learning.

The introductory essay provides an excellent overview for anyone interested in the area. In the authors' words, their *'analysis attempts to explain the various roles the public library adopts and to assess the appropriateness of these to adult learners, and to the activities of other agencies involved.'*[35] The five roles identified [36] were those of:

(1) **Common carrier** - the traditional ,passive service role of unbiased provision of resources to all in the community, regardless of race, colour, creed, etc., i.e. treating adult learners no differently from other clients, and not providing any specialist services for them. Although a very 'democratic' means of service provision, this approach has the effect of casting the net too wide, spreading resources too thinly, and providing inadequate services to meet the demands of particular user groups.

(2) **Back up service** - where public libraries provide back up support for specialist agencies, e.g. rooms for classes; a secondary source of books; handling reference questions; compiling bibliographies; etc., i.e. doing the things librarians are accustomed to doing for their clients. But, again, this is a relatively passive role, and does not focus energy and resources to satisfy specific needs. In this role, the public library is marginal to the adult education process.

(3) **Self-help service** - a more specific and focused service, with librarians responding to particular needs by collecting, assembling and packaging learning materials, but with little emphasis on face to face contact / direct interaction with adult learners.

(4) **Direct service** - where librarians direcly interact with adult learners in all stages of the learning process, helping them to identify learning needs and to achieve learning goals. An innovative role explored to some extent in the U.S. Independent Learning Project, this is a labour intensive approach which involves the librarian taking on a totally different role as learning consultant.

(5) **Network organiser** - where librarians adopt a central role in the adult education process, involved in organising a network of agencies and individuals to provide adult education information and resource services.

Allred and Hay found British librarians generally were most comfortable with the more passive, traditional roles in providing services for adult learners, i.e. roles (1) and (2) in the above list, very much geared to the provision of service to individuals, and actively resisting demands to single out any group in the community, including adult learners, for special attention. They described the general response of public librarians to the *'rapidly increasing expression of needs of adult learners '* as *'vague, very cautious and traditional.'*

> *'There was almost no support for the librarian to take on a guiding and teaching role. The public library is seen as very much a general system of delivering resources*

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[34] John Allred & Wendy Hay , *A preliminary study of the involvement of public libraries with adult learners : final report for the period 13 Dec. 1978 - 30 Apr. 1979 : report to the British Library Research and Development Department . . . .* , Leeds Polytechnic School of Librarianship, Public Libraries Management Research Unit, April, 1979.

[35] ibid., p. 6.

[36] ibid, pp. 21-23.

> *(particularly books) on demand and not as a service that chooses and seeks to satisfy one need rather than another. Any service development that might take away resources from services to the rest of the general public was usually resisted.* '[37]

Failure to identify and define specific needs in the community, the authors felt, was a recipe for an ineffective library service. Wherever resources are scarce, it is a crucial management task to identify particular needs and target groups; to implement programs for those groups; and to evaluate their effectiveness. The researchers' conclusion '*that the general range of public library services is not adequate to the needs of the adult learner* '[38] was seen as the inevitable result of the widespread failure of public librarians to recognise adult learners as a clearly defined user category, with their own particular needs.

In this book, and in a subsequent article by Allred and Surridge[39], the authors encouraged public librarians to become more involved in direct, 'active', service provision to adult learners.

Allred and Hay 's research was one significant input into *Adult Education and Public Libraries in the 1980s* [40] Conference organised by the Library Association in February, 1979. The consensus of opinion presented by speakers at the Conference was that public libraries had an important educational role to play in a technological society with increased opportunities for leisure, and an ongoing need for learning and relearning in personal, occupational and recreational areas of life.

Historically, public libraries had played a very active role in the process of adult education, a central part of the 'bourgeois enlightenment', which sought to raise the cultural level of the mass of industrial society[41]. For most of the 20th Century, however, the public library had fallen back to a 'neutral-passive-supportive' model of service provision, responding to expressed needs, but not actively seeking out new opportunities. One challenge presented at the Conference was that it was time for a 'renaissance', a revival, time to re-examine the role of public libraries and to respond more imaginatively and creatively to the needs of people in a rapidly changing society. Part of this was the challenge of providing information and advisory services to independent learners. Problems likely to be encountered in the process were explored at the Conference, as were practical strategies for responding to new challenges of an active educational role.

2.4 THE DALLAS INDEPENDENT LEARNING PROJECT AND ITS AFTERMATH IN THE UNITED STATES

Mirroring contemporary developments in Open University education in Britain, in the U.S. in the early 1970s, there was a groundswell of interest in notraditional education. One notable early experiment into the role of public libraries in nontraditional learning was the Independent Study Project. Brief accounts of the project and its aftermath are provided in two articles by Brooks[42, 43], and a much fuller account and analysis of the role of the public library in adult learning in a book by Brooks and Reich[44]. The Independent Study Project ran for two years, from 1971 - 1973, and was funded by the Council on Library Resources, the College

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37 ibid., p. 20.

38 ibid.

39 John Allred & Ron Surridge. 'The role of public libraries in open learning', *Assistant librarian*, vol. 76, no. 6, June 1983, pp. 82 - 85.

40 *Adult Education and Public Libraries in the 1980s: a symposium: papers given at a special conference organised by the Library Association on 21 February 1979*, The Library Association, London, c1980.

41 ibid., p. 50.

42 Jean S. Brooks, 'The Dallas experience with independent study ', in Patrick R. Penland, *Librarian as learning consultant*, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa., 1976, pp. 43 - 50.

43 Jean S. Brooks, 'Independent study: how nontraditional is it?', *Journal of academic librarianship*, vol. 2, no. 4, Sept. 1976, pp. 180 - 184.

44 J.S. Brooks & D.L. Reich, *Public library in non-traditional education* , ERIC Publications, Homewood, 1974.

Entrance Examination Board, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Dallas Public Library across its five branches, in collaboration with Southern Methodist University, agreed to assist adult independent learners preparing for CLEP (College Level Entrance Program) tests - by providing study guides and reading lists of relevant library materials, and offering readers' advisory / counselling and referral services. Through these means, independent learners were able to gain credits towards a college qualification. As well as those pursuing college credits, many library users followed the study guides purely for personal enrichment. Some started the scheme and found this mode of study was not for them, prefering to enrol in internal mode in educational institutions.

From the perspectives of both the University and the Public Library, the project was regarded as a success. The Public Library proved to be a useful off campus site for nontraditional offerings. Library staff, though initially opposing the scheme, in time became more accustomed to the unfamiliar role of 'learning consultant'; after two years, they were very commited to their new educational role. However, there were some practical problems As the scheme became widely known, readers' advising became more and more time consuming. Many learners lacked basic study skills, and became very dependent on library staff. Frequently, there was confusion over who was a 'nontraditional' learner entitled to the service, and a 'traditional' student enrolled in a tertiary course. Once the funding ran out, the Library lacked the resources to sustain the scheme.

After the Dallas Project, the Commission on Nontraditional Study recommended that public libraries be strengthened to become a more powerful instrument in nontraditional education. The Commission instigated similar schemes in other public libraries across the U.S. Most of these involved 'for credit' offerings with tertiary institutions. A variety of learning modes was used: as well as books and study guides, some public libraries became off campus viewing sites for videocassette or cable television college courses; library rooms were used for group discussions, off campus tutorials, etc. With these schemes, much attention was devoted to training librarians in educational counselling skills. Unfortunately, with constricting budgets, few libraries had the funds to sustain the projects after external support was withdrawn.

Despite the shortlived nature of such schemes, the commitment of many librarians to the goal of adult independent learning was more enduring. Several writers in the mid-1970s expounded their views on the 'new look' public library , and the changing role of the public librarian.

A workshop held in Pittsburgh in Oct. - Nov. 1975 bore the title *Librarian as Learning Consultant* [45]. In the new and dynamic role of 'learning consultant', the librarian was seen as a crucial link between an adult independent learner's needs and library / community resources available to meet those needs, able to provide educational guidance and focused information support for adults engaged in independent study projects. It was considered that this support should involve all phases of the learning process - providing initial encouragement for adults to pursue independent study projects; and assisting them in the stages of diagnosing individual learning needs; setting learning objectives; identifying learning tasks to be undertaken; translating needs into responsive services; providing relevant materials and services; and obtaining evaluative feedback on the usefulness of materials provided. Patrick Penland in the Introduction to the Workshop proceedings described this 'new image' librarian as a '*change agent* ', '*responsible for guiding the behavioral change of clients* ', '*able to understand and facilitate the learning of individuals through all phases of the behavioral cycle* '.[46] The Workshop was designed to provide training for participants in developing the practical skills necessary to function effectively as learning consultants, i.e :

- effective communication, interviewing, negotiation and counselling skills;
- an understanding of the process of adult learning and factors impeding learning;
- how to act as facilitators / intermediaries in the educational process;

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[45] Patrick R. Penland, *Librarian as learning consultant*, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa., 1976.
[46] Ibid., p. 1.

- how to encourage independence rather than dependence in the client;
- how to define limits to the librarian's role, and to know when to refer the client to a specialist source;
- how to help clients diagnose learning needs, set learning objectives, plan learning resources and strategies, and evaluate outcomes; and
- how to identify learning problems and disabilities.

Reflecting on the increasing involvement of public libraries in the adult education process, Monroe in two articles published in the mid-1970s [47, 48] spoke of the rapid evolution from the traditional, passive 'materials provision' service model to more active models such as that of 'information clearinghouse on independent study ' or 'independent community learning centre', with information and referral centre and learners' advisory functions; or even a 'community task force', concerned with mustering resources from a variety of sources to aid in the solution of community problems. Herself involved in the development of a multimedia workshop training program designed to prepare public librarians to work with adult independent learners, Monroe urged library schools to devote more attention to the area of adult library services, and in particular the process of adult learning and educational counselling and interviewing skills. In this way, new graduates would be better equipped for interaction with adult independent learners in public libraries.

Similar sentiments were expressed in other articles. At about the same time, Olasky[49] noted the changing emphasis of adult services programs in public libraries, with more stress on customised services to individual users rather than to amorphous user groups; more attention to the 'adult as learner' than to the 'adult as reader'; and more active outreach ventures, with librarians actively taking the initiative to develop new programs and services, rather than playing a 'waiting game' for user initiated requests. The public library, in reaching out to serve the new breed of 'adult independent learners' was '*finally being recognised as the university without walls, an institution geared toward supplementing - not supplanting the nation's schools* ', as ' *an agent in nontraditional education* '.[50] These changes had profound implications both for service offerings and staff training in public libraries.

Two valuable sources on the educational role of public libraries in relation to adult independent learning projects are Mavor, Toro and DeProspo's article 'An overview of the national Adult Independent Learning Project'[51], and Boles and Smith's entitled 'The Learner's Advisory Service'[52]. The Adult Independent Learning Project was run by the Office of Independent Study and Guidance Projects, the national office of which was headed by Toro. Toro encouraged nine library systems across the U.S., and the New York statewide network, to fund local ventures for planning and testing services for self-directed learners in their communities. The national office provided back up support for these libraries, and conducted seminars to train representatives from each system in program planning and evaluation; adult learning psychology; educational planning and decision making; interviewing; needs assessment; and selection and use of material. The Project libraries developed a range of advisory and information support services for adult learners, which are described in the articles. Mavor, Toro and DeProspo, after outlining the Project, follow through as a case study, the experience of one of the participating libraries - Atlanta Public Library. Boles and Smith provide a background on 'self-directed' or 'lifelong' learning,

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47 Margaret E. Monroe, 'A conceptual framework for the public library as a community learning center for independent study', *Library quarterly*, vol. 46, no. 1, Jan. 1976, pp. 54 - 61.

48 Margaret E. Monroe, ' Implications of the Open University for changes in library education', *Drexel library quaterly*, vol. 11, no. 2, Apr. 1975, pp. 54 - 67.

49 Christine Olasky, 'The indefinable librarian', *Wilson library bulletin*, vol. 50, no. 4, Dec. 1975, pp. 311 - 314.

50 ibid., p. 312.

51 Anne S. Mavor, Jose Toro & Ernest R. De Prospo, 'An overview of the national Adult Independent Learning Project', *RQ*, vol. 15, no. 4, Summer 1976, pp. 293 - 306.

52 Suzanne Boles & Barbara D. Smith, 'The Learner's Advisory Service', *Library trends*, vol. 28, no. 2, Fall 1979, pp. 165 - 178.

especially on the work of Tough and Knowles, and demonstrate the key role public libraries can play in this process.

Beckerman[53] observed that public libraries had always acknowledged an educational role, but that it had been a rather vague and ill defined one. Without more clearly defined educational goals, Beckerman foreshadowed '*only vague financial support*' in a time of dwindling resources and high inflation, with governments carefully reviewing all items of expenditure. However, he believed that current developments with 'open university ' and other nontraditional educational programs offered a potential challenge for public libraries, an opportunity to redefine educational goals and priorities, and to canvass state and federal government support for strengthening collections.[54]

The most extensive and thorough analysis of the educational role of public libraries in relation to serving adult independent learners is contained in Birge's book[55].Birge presents an historical analysis of the development of the concept in the U.S. :

- from the early days when public libraries were closely associated with moves for universal literacy, and the burgeoning interest in self- education and self-improvement;

- through the early decades of the 20th Century, with public librarians assuming more active, less custodial, roles such as that of readers' adviser, providing a more individualised service, e.g. compiling bibliographies on request, and encouraging follow up with repeat visits by the patron. The aim of readers' advisory work, Birge wrote, was '*to provide mediation between books and readers, to acquaint patrons with the wealth of resources available to those who wished to investigate self-education opportunities*' ; ' *to encourage utilization of the library through a lifelong program of self-directed learning.* ' ' *To establish the relationship between readers and the library, librarians made every effort to demonstrate that the service was not a single episode of passing interest, but a continuing commitment of assistance and concern.*' [56]

- through a reaction (from the late 1930s) against such high quality, but costly, personalised services ,'*to be replaced by a new enthusiasm for serving groups*' such as the new adult reader, the elderly, the culturally disadvantaged, migrants, etc.[57] (i.e. the individual was reached primarily through groups of which s/he was a member). Often this was made possible through grants from the Carnegie Corporation, federal, state or local governments or from other sources. This approach was pursued, with great energy and vigour, into the post-War era, till the late 1960s, when some disillusionment began to set in;

- to a revival of interest in serving individual adult learners triggered by various nontraditional educational programs from the early 1970s. Of particular value in this context was the Adult Independent Learning Project which '*provided a wealth of opportunities for librarians to investigate and participate in vastly expanded services to independent learners, a group of growing importance in a time of increasing interest in nontraditional learning programs of all kinds.* ' [58] However, Birge expressed some concern that the changed service roles explored may not have lasting effect, due not only to the grant money evaporating, but also to an inherent conservatism and preference for more passive, less demanding service roles amongst the profession. She wrote: '*By 1978, even in libraries which had committed myriad hours to the development and provision of learners' advisory activities, there was little evidence that such services were still offered or that adult*

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53 Edwin P. Beckerman, 'Impact of the Open University on public libraries', *Drexel library quarterly*, vol. 11, no. 2, Apr. 1975, pp. 34 -53

54 ibid., especially p. 52

55 Lynn E. Birge, *Serving adult learners: a public library tradition.* ALA, Chicago, 1981.

56 ibid., p. 32.

57 ibid., p. 67.

58 ibid., p. 132.

> *learners had reason to turn to the public library as an acknowledged community center of educational information and extensive personalized assistance in planning learning programs. With the end of outside stimulus and assistance, completion and analysis of the data, and the final report, the influence of the goals, objectives and ideals of the Project rapidly waned and professional interest and concern were largely redirected.'* [59]

Birge's book was written in the hope that librarians would re-examine this active service role, and develop a coherent and clearly articulated philosophy of educational service, which she saw as a possible survival strategy for difficult economic times:

> *' In an era of growing computerization and depersonalization of so many types of public service, the librarian's commitment to providing each individual with the materials and assistance especially suited to that person's need or interest reflects a mode of service increasingly rare. It is this aspect of library service, if adequately known and exploited by the community, which may provide the impetus for continued local financial support in a period of decreasing revenues and escalating costs of all community services.'* [60]

Despite the popular appeal of the notion of public librarian as learning consultant, not all librarians were convinced of the wisdom of such a major role change. Morris[61] in *American libraries* , 1973, launched a vehement attack on those who were advocating that librarians assume functions traditionally the domain of teachers. He perceived each professional group as having its own clearly defined charter - the librarian as spectalist in the area of acquiring, collecting, organising and retrieving resources; the teacher in presenting knowledge in an organised way, with some interpretation, and evaluating how teaching was received by learners.

> *' By and large, the librarian and the teacher have respected each other's turf as religiously as if the theory of territorial imperative was permanently etched into their genetic codes. Now, however, some of the open university plans call for the librarian to be a teacher either by directly organising and imparting specific information or by aiding in the evaluation of the receiver's progress. This, I think, is ground that should be tread lightly, if at all.'* [62]

Leave the job to the institution best set up to serve the need, was his advice. Morris attributed much of the preoccupation with independent adult learners to the 'grants syndrome' - librarians clamouring after whatever public monies were available, often without genuine commitment to the project once it was established:

> *' Just as the organisations are beginning to function, the grant runs out, in three years or so, and the great aspirations of the people involved are dashed. And there is no one around to continue the program, especially the administrators who have gone-a-granting elsewhere. Are the independent study projects sound and basic enough to continue, and thus circumvent great expectations, once the seed money has been gobbled up?'* [63]

Subsequent developments certainty confirmed Morris's expectations in this area - few of the projects continued after the grant money had evaporated. However, as indicated earlier, in the wake of such projects were left some enduring attitudinal changes amongst many public librarians - a broader notion of professional responsibility which comprised more direct and active service provision roles, including a specific commitment to serving adult independent learners.

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59 ibid., p. 133.

60 ibid., p. 138.

61 Roger Morris, 'Keep the independent student independent ', *American libraries* , vol. 4, no. 7, July-Aug. 1973, pp. 421 - 423.

62 ibid., p. 421.

63 ibid., p. 423.

2.5 PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND ADULT LEARNERS: THE AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCE

As in Britain and the U.S., there has been a great resurgence of interest in adult education and nontraditional forms of study since the 1970s in Australia. Most Australian universities and colleges are placing increasing emphasis on more flexible modes of study, with a significant growth in courses available externally. External courses are particularly important in Australia, where the population living outside the capital cities is scattered, and distances great. While the tertiary institutions generally provide library services tailored to the needs of external students, these students also make considerable demands on public library services where they are available.

Bellamy[64] in a 1985 article reported on his experience in providing library service to external students in the public library at Weipa, a small, isolated mining community in North Queensland. Bellamy pointed out that demands of external students on public librarieshave significantly increased over recent years, with numbers of externally enrolled students in Australian universities and colleges doubling from c. 20,000 to c. 40,000 in the five years between 1977 and 1982. Willing to accept external students as legitimate public library users, Bellamy developed a range of services for this user group, e.g. special borrowing privileges; access to interlibrary loans; study guides; study facilities; extended evening opening hours; meetings for groups of external students; and use of the Library as an examination centre. Bellamy said that decisions about the relative extent of service a public library will offer external students must be made individually by each public library, and will be influenced by both the resources of the library and the range of existing resources available locally for the students[65].

Over the past decade, there have been several Australian conferences on library services and adult education.

At the University of Sydney, October 1976, a joint Riverina C A E / University of Sydney seminar, *Libraries and adult education* [66], was held to promote dialogue and cooperation between adult educators and librarians. Crowley[67] highlighted the integral part played by library services in adult education, both currently and historically. He even canvassed the idea of using librarians as adult educators, especially in rural areas where there was a lack of trained personnel. However, he felt that librarians needed to promote their services much more actively than they did, seeing many of the available resources went untapped.

Hartridge[68] addressed the issue of the librarian's role in serving external students. Although some courses were quite self-contained, with comprehensive sets of notes, photocopied articles, and tapes provided, others required more library usage. Most of the tertiary institutions offering external courses had well developed library services for external students. Nevertheless, because of their proximity and convenience, local public libraries were often prefered by some external students. With other students, there was a lack of awareness of services and resources offered by public libraries. Like Crowley, Hartridge stressed the importance of promoting services available for external students, but only if the library had something to offer. Procuring reading lists and syllabi from external studies schools, he recommended as a useful purchasing guide. But, of course, there was that perennial problem of how small public libraries can cater adequately for the wide range of subjects and levels covered by external courses. This problem was compounded by factors such as continuing changes in courses and reading lists, and subjects 'on the books' which are rarely taught. Rather than public libraries purchasing all recommended titles, Hartridge felt a more realistic approach was to ensure a reasonable coverage of each subject field, so that students could

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64 Morris Bellamy, 'Anyone for external studies?; public library support for isolated students', *The Australian library journal*, vol. 34, no. 4, Nov. 1985, pp. 21-24.

65 ibid., p. 21.

66 *Libraries and adult education : papers presented to a seminar held in the Mackie Building, University of Sydney, 9 October, 1976*, edited by Digby Hartridge, Department of Library and Information Science, Riverina C A E, Wagga Wagga, N.S.W., 1977.

67 ibid. pp. 1 - 10.

68 ibid. pp. 11 - 19.

locate relevant information, if not the actual titles on the reading lists. Apart from the provision of relevant materials, other crucial services for external students were: promptly supplied interlibrary loans; user education / guidance, i.e. instruction in the use of catalogues and indexes, and how to locate and evaluate information; and adequate study facilities. In dealing with external students, he stressed the need for understanding, effective interpersonal skills, and a willingness to listen. With external courses, student isolation, uncertainty and lack of self-confidence can pose major problems, undoubtedly contributing to the very high drop out rates of many courses (many as high as 60%).

At the same Conference, Wood[69] provided some interesting insights into one regional library 's activities in the adult education area. At Geelong Regional Library in the early 1970s, an adult education officer was employed to coordinate adult education activities and resources within the region. Besides developing relevant collections of books and nonbook materials, the Officer helped to build up a community information file and human resources directory within the region, which was of considerable value in planning adult education programs.

The challenges of training librarians for adult education work were addressed by Reid-Smith [70] in a concluding paper at the Conference. Regarding adult education as one important function of public libraries, Reid-Smith encouraged the development of continuing education courses for librarians in this area - all the more so, seeing adult education was not dealt with by any of the library schools. Active liaison with adult education organisers, he felt, was an excellent means of promoting the use of public libraries as educational and cultural centres, an area librarians needed to develop further.

Three years later (October, 1979), a similar Conference entitled *Librarians and adult educators : partners in learning*[71] was organised by the New South Wales Board of Adult Education and the State Library of N.S.W. The Conference was designed to examine relationships and cooperation between librarians and adult education agencies in N.S.W., other states and overseas; and to discuss ways librarians and adult educators could interact to achieve their objectives[72]. Much of the published proceedings focus on the nature and structure of adult education in N.S.W. Yuen[73], from the Public Libraries Division of the State Library of N.S.W. raised some important points on the relationship between public libraries and adult education. The education of adults was an implicit value in the original public library movement. Library Acts were passed in each Australian state on a platform of 'Information, Education and Recreation' - for the progress, enlightenment and prosperity of the community as a whole, so that citizens would be adequately informed and make productive use of their leisure time. Yuen was critical of the general lack of evaluation of adult services in public libraries, and that few public libraries had been actively involved with specific operational programs in the adult education area. Most were quite satisfied with their passive role of providing materials for adults - they exhibited a 'willingness to serve', but did little in concrete terms to initiate such programs, she claimed.

One of the Library Association of Australia's particularly active 'Special Interest Groups' is the Special Interest Group on Distance Education, established in 1979, which has organised a number of workshops on 'distance education', and has several publications to its credit.

The Group's June 1981 Brisbane Workshop, *Library services in distance education* [74] canvassed a number of topical issues in the field. Fisher, the keynote speaker, in his

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69 ibid., pp. 20 -27

70 ibid., pp. 28 - 40

71 *Librarians and adult educators : partners in learning : papers from a conference organised by the N.S.W. Board of Adult Education with the State Library of N.S.W., at the Institute of Administration, University of N.S.W., Little Bay, N.S.W., 30th Oct. - 1st Nov. 1979* , N.S.W. Board of Adult Education, Sydney, 1979.

72 ibid., p. 1.

73 ibid., pp. 24 -31.

74 Library Association of Australia,Special Interest Group on Distance Education, *Library services in distance education : proceedings of a national workshop, Brisbane, June 1981*, LAA, Sydney, 1982.

introductory address [75], explored some '*common problems in [the provision of] library resources for off campus students* '. Once regarded as marginal to a university 's main purpose, external studies departments seemed to make some gains in times of shrinking resources and contracting enrolments, with universities '*having to turn more to the adult population, and to distance education, in order to retain student numbers* [76]'. Adequate resources for external students must be provided by the tertiary institution, whether the courses are to be for degree credit or not for credit. Fisher expressed a preference for a separate 'Extension Library ' rather than integrating resources for external studies with the main collection, believing that off campus students are better served this way. However, he stressed that the Library must be adequately staffed and resourced, and be under the jurisdiction of the University Librarian. Ideally, he said ' *an extension library should aim to be as self-sufficient as possible and to draw on the resources of other libraries only as supplementation*' [77]. Means of document delivery to external students vary according to the situation - provision of small ,permanent branch extension libraries, e.g. in regional study centres or in public libraries; providing book boxes for particular classes; or delivery services to individual students. Difficulties encountered in providing resources for external students include:

- the wide range and diversity of **courses** (e.g. for credit or not for credit; vocational or liberal education), **teaching** modes (e.g. own texts plus correspondence notes; self-directed and unstructured; mass media repeats of classes delivered to internal students, or specifically devised for external mode), and **subjects** (e.g. social sciences / humanities areas with extensive additional reading c.f. some practical or vocational subjects requiring primarily prepared handouts);
- degree of geographical isolation of the student - the very isolated who lack access to other library facilities, calling for expensive special arrangements;
- location of off campus classes - some of these centres may lack access to library facilities;
- timing of delivery - there is an immediacy of need with the majority of demands;
- late submission of booklists;
- uncertainty over numbers of multiple copies required;
- copyright problems in nonbook materials, and problems with security and servicing of audiovisual equipment.

From the student's viewpoint:

- lack of opportunity for constructive browsing of the tertiary library collection;
- lack of user education.

However, the overriding problem experienced by most institutions was inadequate funding for services to off campus students.

Fisher admitted that often '*external students in many places have had to rely too heavily on libraries other than those of their parent institution* '[78]. Concerning the role of public libraries in serving external students, he raised some very valid points:

> '*In practice, of course, we sometimes have to ask public libraries to make direct provision to off-campus students, and this makes very good sense if they happen to be already strong in the resources needed. But often they do not have what the*

75 ibid., pp. 3 - 10.
76 ibid., p. 3.
77 ibid., p. 8
78 ibid.

> *students need; and occasionally, even if they do have it, they are unwilling to single out a particular section of the public for special treatment. The extent of involvement of public librarians in serving extension students either as individuals or as a group is a big problem which needs much more investigation.'* [79]

Other papers at the Conference focused on the Australian perspective on problems and responsibilities in library service to external students. Stoc[80] provided an historical overview of the development of library services to external students in Australia, and reported on surveys on library services to external students, sent both to Australian (1979) and to selected overseas tertiary institutions(1981) offering off campus courses. Radford[81], '*while supporting wholeheartedly the high-sounding statement that external students should receive the same services as are enjoyed by internal students*' [an ideal frequently reiterated at the Conference], acted the part of the grim realist, presenting '*sufficient arguments to indicate that the achievement of such a high standard is fraught with difficulty*'. [82] Primarily due to inadequate funding for library services to off campus students, Radford expressed the view that '*with very few exceptions, institutions teaching externally in Australia have failed to make adeq[illegible]rovision for library service to their external students.*' [83]

A major issue raised at the Conference was the need for Australian standards for services to external students, following the lead of Britain and the U.S. in this area. One outgrowth of the Conference was the formation of a Working Party to devise the standards. In late 1982, the product of their deliberations was published as *Guidelines for library services to external students* [84]. Crocker, Convenor of the Special Interest Group on Distance Education, stressed in the Introduction that this was a preliminary document containing qualitative statements, and expressed the hope that, in the future, specific, quantitative standards would be produced. She explained:

> *'To date, libraries have not gathered in standard format statistics involving the provsion of resources of services to external students: with insufficient information available, it was difficult to recommend quantitative standards.'* [85]

Areas addressed by the *Guidelines* include: funding, staff, the collection, access, information services, user guides, loans, copying, and charges. Within each section, key principles are outlined, and amplified by a checklist of questions intended for individual libraries to use as a means of evaluating current service provision for external students.

Further insights into the area of provision of library services to external students were gained in another Special Interest Group on Distance Education seminar held in Sydney, on March 1 - 2, 1987. This *Forum on the Coordination of Library Services to External Students* [86], involving representation from special, public, school and TAFE libraries, as well as tertiary libraries, aimed to explore possible means of cooperation between the different sectors, to ensure more adequate provision of library services to external students. Six major issues and associated courses of action were identified from the workshop:

- The need for further information on library services to off campus students, and for more adequate documentation of the information which currently exists. The compilation of an annotated bibliography on the topic was recommended.

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79 ibid., pp. 8 - 9

80 ibid., pp. 11 -27.

81 ibid., pp. 28 - 41.

82 ibid., p. 39.

83 ibid., p. 29.

84 Library Association of Australia, Special Interest Group on Distance Education, *Guidelines for library services to external students*, prepared by a Sub-Committee of the Special Interest Group on Distance Education, edited by Christine Crocker, LAA, Sydney, 1982.

85 ibid., p. 7.

86 Library Association of Australia, Special Interest Group on Distance Education, *Forum on the Coordination of Library Services to External Students* [proceedings of a seminar held at LAA Headquarters, Ultimo, N.S.W., March 1-2, 1987], LAA, Sydney, 1987.

- The need for a manual - *External students and your library*, to be distributed free of charge to librarians from public,special and other types of libraries, designed to explain existing services available for external students from their institutional libraries, and the role other libraries can play in providing a back up service for these students.

- The need to disseminate information to external students on the effective use of other libraries - in the form of a common national guide.

- The need to extend borrowing privileges for external students at libraries of other tertiary institutions.

- The need for more effective utilisation of available information networks / technology in facilitating access for external students to library materials.

- The need to explore possible relationships between service to external students in the tertiary and TAFE sectors.

Follow up action is anticipated on several of these issues in the near future.

One issue with regard to external students' usage of public (and other types of) libraries concerns their requests for interlibrary loans through these libraries rather than through their home institutions. This is currently a source of ill feeling between some public and academic librarians in Australia, since the recent (July 1987) introduction of a flat $6 charge per interlibrary loan - books or photocopies. Public librarians, quite justifiably, resent having to pay this fee where tertiary students are involved. A letter from C.D. Marshall from Riverina Community Library Service addressing this issue, which contained the phrase '*the universities do not meet their needs*', elicited the following response in *Incite*, April 1987, from Cameron, Chief Librarian, Deakin University[87]. Although the letter said very little about interlibrary loans as such, it does provide a succinct statement of the library services one institution offers its off campus students, and some insight into reasons why these students use other libraries as well as their own - which is why I have chosen here to quote at length from the letter.

> '*Deakin off-campus students receive a comprehensive library service from the Deakin University Library. Students may request books, journals articles and audiovisual items; requests are accepted by telephone, telex, Viatel and telefacsimile, as well as by post. Requests are attended to on the day they are received, and material is sent to students around the country by a courier service. There is no payment required for this service and the library also pre-pays the return courier delivery of all loans.*
>
> '*If students are unsure of the resources appropriate for a particular assignment, they may request reference assistance; a librarian on the staff carries out a literature search on their behalf, selects suitable material and forwards it promptly to the student. Library staff often telephone students to discuss their needs.*'
>
> '*All students receive a guide to the services available from the Library. Photocopies of journal articles are provided free of charge, and interlibrary loan privileges are extended to students involved in research for a thesis or major assignment.*'
>
> '*It is not correct to say that Deakin does not meet the library-related needs of its off-campus population; this university is committed to distance teaching, and to the provision of excellent support services for distant students.*'

On the interlibrary loans issue, she concluded:

> ' *It should not however, be necessary, and it is almost always slower, for students to ask public libraries to get material on interlibrary loan.*'

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87 Margaret A. Cameron, 'Services to off-campus students', *Incite : newsletter of the Library Association of Australia*, vol. 8, no. 6, 17 Apr. 1987, p. 11.

With reference to external students' usage of other libraries, Cameron referred to findings of a 1983 evaluative study of library usage by Australian external students [88]:

> *'that external students prefer to use whatever library resources are personally available to them - their own collections, those of their friends, those of public libraries, special libraries, other tertiary libraries.' '. . . external students are human too - they prefer to use a library in person, no matter how good the support service from their home institution.'*

In this study, Winter and Cameron found that 43% of respondents used public libraries for study materials, although only slightly over one third of these respondents regarded public libraries collections as either 'good' or 'very good' for this purpose. The research supported the results of previous studies that proportionately external students use facilities of their own tertiary libraries less than do internally enrolled students. Winter and Cameron explained this in terms of these students' more extensive use of alternative sources of information.

> *'This study has found that, in addition to their own library, external students use many other sources of information, at least as much as their own library and probably more.'*
>
> *'The home library, by delivery or personal visit, is one of many sources heavily used by external students. Equally well used sources of study materials are public libraries, other tertiary libraries, friends, and the student's own collection of books. Lesser use is made of school libraries, study centre libraries, and libraries at the student's workplace. Almost 90% of external students attempt to obtain study materials additional to their study guides and notes from various available sources.'*
>
> *'The objective need not be the achievement of equal numbers of borrowings by external and internal students. What is important is that external students have equal access to appropriate study materials (from whatever source), and that those who choose, or are forced to rely exclusively on their own library, face as few barriers as possible. It is highly unlikely that external students will ever develop the same reliance on their home library as internal students.*[89]

The issues raised here will be addressed in the current research.

2.6 BACKGROUND ON SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING THE VICTORIAN PUBLIC LIBRARY SCENE

Pressure for improved funding for public libraries, the 'poor cousins' of academic libraries, has long been on the 'political' agenda at both State and Federal levels. After a considerable infusion of Federal Government funding into Australian university libraries from the late 1950s as a result of the 1957 Murray Report; into libraries of colleges of advanced education from the mid- to late-1960s in the wake of the 1965 Martin Report; into primary and secondary school libraries from about the same time; and into TAFE (Technical and Further Education) libraries following the 1974 Kangan Report; public libraries were noticeably deprived of their share of the Federal budgetary cake.

In May, 1966, the Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographical Services (AACOBS) released a statement *Libraries for the public: a statement of deficiencies in public library services, and a plea for Commonwealth financial support* [90]. An outgrowth of several surveys of library resources at the national (e.g. the Tauber Report) and state (e.g. the Burmester Report) levels, which had highlighted severe deficiencies in resourcing of State and public libraries, this Statement urged an immediate funding increase - at least a doubling of current

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88 A. Winter & M. Cameron, *External students and their libraries*, Deakin University, Geelong., Vic., 1983.

89 ibid., p. 84.

90 Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographical Services, *Libraries for the public: a statement of deficiencies in public library services, and a plea for Commonwealth financial support*, Canberra, 1966.

expenditure figures in the short term. This was seen as essential to increase and improve the bookstock of the State libraries; to expand public library services to areas at the time not covered by such services; to raise bookstock and staffing levels in existing public libraries; and to counter the effect of inflation on book prices. It was asserted that State and local governments, the traditional funders of public library services, could not raise their expenditures to the levels required: AACOBS made the reques' that the Federal Government consider breaching the funding gap. The Statement posed the argument that the expansion in the tertiary education sector over the past decade which was helping create an informed and literate population, was considerably increasing demands on all types of libraries, including public libraries.

This preliminary statement was followed up two years later (July 1968) by a renewal of the earlier submission entitled *Libraries for the public: a statement of needs* [91], its object being *'further to inform the Commonwealth Government of the need for greatly increased financial support for libraries directly serving the public.'* At this stage, it was *'not the intention to analyse the present position in full detail but simply to adduce evidence that an examination is warranted into the inadequate financial provision now being made for these library services.'*

After ongoing political agitation by the profession, the Whitlam Government in March 1975 responded by appointing a Committee of Inquiry into Public Libraries. Its terms of reference were:

> *'(a) to inquire into and report upon the current role and effectiveness of State, regional and municipal libraries in serving the information and recreational needs of the community including the limitations imposed by existing methods and levels of financing and staffing.*
>
> *(b) to report upon the desirable future roles for, and development of, State, regional and municipal library services, including priorities of need for these libraries; interaction with, or dependence on, developments in related fields; likely costs; manpower and training requirements; requirements for specialised services; the need, and possible mechanics, for the provision of Australian Government assistance.*
>
> *(c) to recommend measures necessary to give effect to these developments and means whereby these measures might be implemented.*[92]

The Committee, through a series of newspaper advertisements invited submissions from interested parties - individuals and groups; and organised hearings in capital cities in mid-1975. In all, 466 written submissions were received. The Library Association of Australia's lengthy submission *It's all a matter of what you know* was published as a special supplement to *The Australian library journal* in late 1975[93]. The submission focused on the integral educational role of public libraries in the information age, crucial to a free society and informed citizenry. Lifelong education; services to underprivileged groups; community information services; services to particular user groups, e.g. occupational and ethnic groups; the impact of modern technology on libraries; the need for more effective national coordination of library services through the establishment of a national library authority, a national information policy, and the development of computerised networks; joint use library facilities; the need for ongoing financial support (not just a 'one up' injection of capital funding); appropriately trained staff; and the need for relevant research projects - were some of the themes explored in the submission.

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91 Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographical Services, *Libraries for the public: a statement of needs*, Canberra, 1968.

92 Australia, Committee of Inquiry into Public Libraries, *Public libraries in Australia : report of the Committee of Inquiry into Public Libraries*, [The Horton report], AGPS, Canberra, 1976, p. 1.

93 W.D. Richardson, B. Reid, J. Vaughan and C. Watson, 'It's all a matter of what you know : submission of the Library Association of Australia to the Committee of Inquiry into Public Libraries', *The Australian library journal* , vol. 24, nos. 9-10, Oct. - Nov. 1975, Part B, pp. 413 - 459.

The final report of the Committee entitled *Public libraries in Australia* [94] appeared in February 1976. After commencing with a brief survey of Australian public libraries, a discussion of their role in the community, and analysis of major problems confronting them, the Report examined possible courses of action to solve the problems, and proposed a comprehensive program involving cooperative action by Federal, State and local governments for the upgrading of public libraries in Australia.

> *'To sum up, this Committee believes that provision of public library and information services is the responsibility of the Commonwealth, State and local levels of government and should be funded in part by each of these. . . . both the library profession and funding authorities should direct their efforts towards the further development of the information role of library service. A major concern of both the Commonwealth and State Governments should be the provision of equality of service on the basis of reasonable need. Public library and information services should be provided free of charge to all members of the community.*
>
> *'Total library service cannot be provided by any one type of unit but only by the cooperative efforts of all types of information agencies working towards a mutually accepted and designed system . . .'*
>
> *'The Commonwealth Government should give the highest priority to assisting the State Governments in developing the State systems of cooperative, resource-sharing library and information services. In consultation with the States, the Commonwealth has a vital role in ensuring that the various autonomous State systems are integrated into a national network. Our proposals represent an integrated solution to the problems of public libraries which should facilitate cost effective and professionally sound development of these services.'* [95]

It was established that approximately $20 million a year of Federal funding (at 1975 prices) would be needed for ten years to achieve these goals.

Several research studies provided valuable input into the CIPL [Horton] Report. Handfield and Hamilton-Smith's *Libraries and people in Melbourne* [96], carried out in 1974 and based on a series of interviews given to, and questionnaires distributed amongst, a stratified sample of households in four library service areas, was a practical survey *'designed to find out what kind of people use libraries and what kind of people do not do so.'* [97] Like most other user surveys, there was a strong correlation demonstrated between incidence of public library usage and factors such as length of residential stability; occupation and education. Overall, approximately one third of adults claimed to have used public libraries within the last twelve months. However, amongst university graduates, the figure was 51%; amongst technical college and other tertiary graduates, 44%; 36% of those who had attained Leaving or Matriculation; 32% who had some secondary education; and 9% of those who had only primary education [98]. Student usage of public libraries was high - students made considerable use of public library reference facilities and study areas. The need for longer library opening hours, especially at weekends, and for specialised literature, in particular student references, were two persistent demands made by students. Respondents exhibited a very low level of awareness of the interlibrary loans system and its ability to fill specialised needs. The authors recommended further investigation into the relationships of school libraries and public libraries; the ways students use each type of library; the success of integrated school/ public library facilities; and for closer relationships to be established between the library and teaching professions.

Amongst the survey population, the researchers found public library registration statistics did not provide an accurate reflection of the true extent of borrowing - 6% of those who were not registered borrowers borrowed reading material on another borrower's card. Some who were

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94 Australia, Committee of Inquiry into Public Libraries, *op. cit.*.

95 ibid., pp. 106 - 107.

96 Carey Handfield & Elery Hamilton-Smith, *Libraries and people in Melbourne : a study for the Library Council of Victoria*, LCV, Melbourne, 1975.

97 ibid., p. 155.

98 ibid., p. 58.

not members used public library facilities inhouse. While the range of public library membership statistics was 18% - 31% in the four library service areas, 51% - 60% of households claimed usage of the public library.

Handfield and Hamilton-Smith observed that the general perception of public library service amongst respondents was restricted very much to that of the traditional book oriented service.

> *'Current demand for public library services is limited by the general lack of awareness of what a library can provide and what a library might provide. This is an important point - people are not going to demand something from a library unless they see it as part of the service the library might or should provide.'* [99]

They argued that libraries should not seek to satisfy only the majority viewpoint, but *'to identify the range of viewpoints; and design to meet the needs of people right across the range'*, e.g. those who a re physically handicapped.

The limited view of the nature of public library services evident amongst respondents, the researchers concluded, also extended to many public librarians:

> *'It is our impression that most public librarians tend to adopt a relatively passive view of their own role. It is not possible for us to judge how far this is due to the current shortage of resources, and how far to the traditional book oriented perception of the library role. We would certainly raise the question of how far the library might take the initiative in more actively informing the community of the services which it does or might offer. If one accepts the concept of an active role then, in turn, this means identifying specific areas of community interest, and then making known to each of those interests the various resources which are most relevant to them.'* [100]

Another Victorian research project which was in progress, but not completed at the time of the CIPL deliberations was the Westudy Project. This was designed to investigate the library and information needs of those living in the Western Region of Melbourne, with particular attention to the needs of special groups, e.g. migrants, young adults, the aged; and to evaluate existing library resources and services against established standards. A survey methodology was used - a questionnaire, supplemented by more indepth data from six case study families from the region. Following the trend of most similar surveys, this study found that people generally prefered individuals as sources of information to either organisations or print sources; and that library usage was strongly related to education, occupation and ethnicity. Significant inadequacies were revealed in the current pattern of provision of library and information services in the area, well below the LAA minimum standards, and comparable services in other parts of Melbourne. To ensure provision of relevant and adequate information services for the region, the Westudy Report[101] recommended (amongst other things) a major injection of funds to bring existing library and information services up to minimum standards set by the LAA; the establishment of a Western Regional Information and Library Authority, to coordinate the planning and operation of the library services in the Region, funded by Commonwealth, State and local government sources; and the development of specialised information services, e.g. community information centres, within each municipality.

Hopes for the alleviation of public library resourcing problems were shattered by the events of November 1975 which resulted in the dismissal of the Whitlam Labor Government and its ultimate replacement by a Liberal Government led by Malcolm Fraser. The halcyon days of liberal public sector spending were gone, replaced by a new order characterised by austerity measures and cutbacks. Even the re-election of a Labor Government led by Bob Hawke in 1982 failed to usher in the hoped for changes in Federal policy towards public libraries. With the economic climate of the 1980s - soaring inflation rates; the mushrooming national debt;

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99 ibid., p. 123.

100 ibid., p. 128.

101 Australia, Department of Environment, Housing and Community Development, *The Westudy report: a report on the information and library needs of the citizens of the Western Region of Melbourne*, prepared jointly by the Library Council of Victoria and the Victorian Council of Social Service, AGPS, Canberra, 1976.

and the dramatic fall of the Australian dollar - any expansionistic plans were doomed. The past decade has been characterised by a curtailment of spending in most areas; increasing calls for accountability on the way in which public monies are spent; and the expectation that public enterprises through productivity / performance gains will be able to do more with less. Somewhere along the line, the grim economic realities have led to a faltering of the 'grand vision' of a well endowed, nationally coordinated network of library and information services.

Under the new order, advocates of Federal funding for public libraries, while continuing to urge the implementation of the recommendations of the Horton Report, did alter their approach somewhat to fit the changed economic circumstances. Rather than continuing to plead for the massive injection of Federal funding for public libraries, which was highly unlikely, lobbying became more focused, and more concerned with specific issues than general, blanket demands.

A dominant theme of Australian reports on public libraries appearing in the mid- to late-1970s was a need for a significant upgrading of services so that public libraries would be in a position to assume a much more active educational and informational role rather than a predominantly recreational one. W.L. Brown, State Librarian from Tasmania expressed such sentiments in his submission to the TEND (Tasmanian Education Next Decade) Committee in 1977.[102] Brown saw this role in terms of public libraries both providing a **backup resource** for those enrolled in formal educational courses - for children at school, or students at tertiary level who choose to use the public library because of its convenience and / or access to particular resources or services; and as a **primary resource** for those attending adult education courses not leading to any formal qualification, and for self-motivated adult independent learners. Reflecting on the writings of the radical educator Ivan Illich, and overseas experiments such as the Dallas Project, Brown foreshadowed the possible development of public libraries as an important educational support system, as resource centres for nontraditional extracurricular study, an alternative to conventional educational institutions - a time when librarians would move from their custodial role as preservers and dispensers of resources to an entrepreneurial role as learning facilitators. To more effectively service the informational and educational needs of Tasmanians, Brown urged a broadening of the State's library resource base, and the provision of improved access to it through centralised coordination, regionalisation, voluntary cooperative ventures and the use of sophisiticated technological systems to facilitate communication between elements within the system.

In 1977, the appointment by the Federal Government of a Committee of Enquiry into Education and Training (CEET) provided another opportunity for the LAA to lobby further on the issue of Federal support for public libraries, considering the lack of any action on the Horton recommendations. Their submission entitled *Libraries, information and education* [103] provides a succinct statement of the educational role of public libraries:

> *'[Public libraries] perform a valuable supportive role in education. First, those persons who are involved in formal education, either as students or as teachers, not only have the right, as do all other citizens, to use libraries provided for the public but also, not surprisingly, are heavy users of them. Very frequently these libraries are more conveniently located than are the libraries of teaching institutions for "after hours" or weekend use. Moreover, they can often provide material unavailable in institutional libraries and / or they can provide the refreshment of a different environment, a different approach to reader assistance, or simply a different collection.'* [104]

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102 W.L. Brown, *Learning and libraries: a submission to the TEND Committee* , State Library of Tasmania, [Hobart], 1977.

103 Library Association of Australia, *Libraries, information and education : a submission by the Library Association of Australia to the Committee of Enquiry into Education and Training* , LAA, Sydney, 1977.

104 ibid., p. 5.

For others, the public library has an important role in the area of self-education and continuing education, informing, helping people keep abreast of developments in their field.

The submission was intended as an endorsement of the conclusions of the Horton Committee - *'that there is an urgent need for the infusion of Federal funds into libraries for the public and that an independent statutory body be set up to coordinate these and other matters relating to libraries and information services for the nation.'* [105] While university, college, school and TAFE libraries had each benefited immensely from Federal support, public libraries were suffering deterioration due to continuing inadequate levels of resourcing.

According to usual government practice, after the tabling of the Horton Report in both houses of Federal Parliament on March 31 - April 1, 1976, an interdepartmental working group was formed to review the report and its recommendations. Although this Group's confidential report was submitted in August, 1977, no further action was taken for another two years, when another interdepartmental working group (IWG) was established. The IWG was commissioned to recommend action which should be taken by the Commonwealth in the light of the Horton Report, but with regard also to the 'new federalism' policies of the Fraser Liberal Government. In their recommendations, the IWG managed to absolve the Federal Government of virtually all financial or other obligations to public libraries. The library profession's long campaign *for* Federal funding for public libraries was dealt a summary blow, as indicated in the following recommendation:

> *'In view of the Government's federalism policies, no special funds should be allocated to the States for the provision of public library services.'* [106]

The 'federalism' policy stressed the need for devolution of many previous Commonwealth responsibilities and decision making powers to State and local government levels, e.g. by providing block grants for community services and facilities, and leaving it up to the particular government to decide how best to disburse the funds. The IWG argued that increasing Federal funding to local government, and increases in State funding to public libraries (an assertion not borne out in reality in Victoria at least, where there had been a progressive decline in real terms in the proportion of State funding for public libraries) rendered additional Commonwealth assistance unnecessary.

Other recommendations of the IWG included the need for an evaluation of school / community libraries; the extension at the national level of library services to the handicapped, coordinated through the National Library of Australia; and the establishment of an Australian Libraries and Information Council (ALIC) to encourage nationwide cooperation and to assist in the coordination of library services throughout Australia (seeing AACOBS lacked a statutory base and was therefore not formally recognised by Commonwealth or State governments as an advisory body on the development of library and information services). This Council *'would be responsible for providing advice to Governments at all levels on the development of library and related information services in Australia, with particular reference to:*

> *(a) the formulation and progressive development of a national plan for the development of library and related information services at the national, State and local government levels; and*
>
> *(b) the establishment and operation of mechanisms to facilitate resource sharing in the field of libraries and related information services.'* [107]

It was stressed strongly that the function of this body would be to offer advice to Ministers, and that it would not have a funding role. [108] Membership would be small, so that the Group would

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105 ibid., p. 8.

106 Australia, Department of Home Affairs and Environment, *Policy on assistance to public libraries : report submitted by interdepartmental working group to the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment*, AGPS, Canberra, 1981, p. vi.

107 ibid.

108 ibid., p. 57.

be workable; it would include the Director-General of the National Library of Australia; the State librarians; three representatives from the education sector nominated by the Commonwealth Minister for Education; and a nominee of the Minister for Science and the Environment (due to the importance of the role of CSIRO in the library and information field. The recommendation for the establishment of an ALIC had come originally from the 1979 Perth Conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers for Culture and the Arts, but was supported strongly by the IWG.

The IWG Report was a classical example of political 'buck passing', totally failing to address the issues raised in the Horton Report and other submissions on public libraries, and moving the problem back to the State and local government levels.

When a Federal Labor Government replaced the Liberal Government in 1982, new hopes were sparked for the cause of Federal funding for public libraries - in the Australian Labor Party 's platform on national information policy, it was accepted in principle that each of the three tiers of government should fund library services. However, in the current climate of severe economic constraint, it is highly unlikely that any policy with considerable funding implications will get off the ground.

An active lobbying campaign has been waged by public librarians in Victoria for some years to increase the declining level of State funding to public libraries.

At the request of the Minister for the Arts, Haratsis was commissioned by the Library Council of Victoria to carry out a review of public library funding in Victoria.[109] At the time, the State Government was considering the introduction of block 'human services' grants to local government, from which all local services, including public libraries, would be funded. The Haratsis Report , submitted in September 1984, was not published until mid-1986, an unfortunate delay seeing it was the intention that the report be a public discussion document.

Unlike the Horton Report, which called for a large, swift injection of funds, Haratsis demonstrated that the public library 'predicament' *'is not just one of the level of resources.'* He argued that major changes were needed in the way public library services were funded to meet the challenges of the 1980s, especially to take account of the existence of multiple funding sources and multiple funding aims.

> *'. . .Federal, State and local governments have failed dismally in analysing critically the function of public libraries in conjunction with appropriate funding mechanisms.'*
>
> *'The inability of public library services to attract sufficient funds to play a central role in providing access to information for the community has been due to functional obsolescence caused by competition from an increasingly diversified and specialised range of library services. Public libraries have been left the role of generalist library service, operating basically as lending libraries. Because of the generally low profile of this role, public libraries have increasingly fared worse for funds compared with other library services, other programs in the non-cultural sector of the Arts portfolio, and other aligned portfolios of the State Government, such as the Education Department. Amidst social and technological change, public library services have not been able to develop and retain political commitments.'*[110]

Although in the 'missionary ' phase of public library development, dollar for dollar subsidies worked well to achieve a **resource spreading**, i.e. extending the population covered by public library services within the State, now there was a need, Haratsis believed, for a more innovative approach to enable **resource deepening**. He felt that while the existing specific purpose matching grants should be retained in some form, there should be some provision for **needs based** funding; that the LCV specific purpose grants should be reorganised along program budgeting lines; and that a more concerted effort needed to be made to tap the range of State government funds available for funding library and information

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109 B.P. Haratsis, *Funding access to information for all Victorians : a review of public library funding in Victoria : consultant report to the Library Council of Victoria, September 1984*, LCV, Melbourne, 1986.

110 ibid., p. xvii.

services for the public. The Library Council of Victoria, he considered, had an important role in making public libraries *'aware of the range of State Government funds available and where possible to negotiate in cooperation with one or a number of services to secure those funds.'* [111] One particularly important point he raised, which needs further investigation, concerns exploration of possible funding from the State Education budget, seeing public libraries are demonstrably institutions with an educational function, used extensively by students for purposes related to their study. As he demonstrated, the decline over recent years of expenditure on school libraries has created further pressure on public libraries.

At the local library level, Haratsis stressed the need for funds to be allocated to broad program outputs, in four broad areas - education, recreation and leisure, community and business information, and welfare extension (i.e. services to disadvantaged groups such as the housebound, the print handicapped, or non-English speakers) ; for program outputs to be targeted towards specific user submarkets; and for management to become more flexible in seeking and taking advantage of multiple State grants.

From the late 1970s through the 1980s in Australia, as in other Western countries, increasing calls for accountability from funding authorities for the ways in which public monies are spent, has triggered interest in devising suitable measures of library effectiveness as a means of evaluating service adequacy. Based on the work of De Prospo et al [112] and Zweizig and Rodger [113] in the U.S., several Australian studies have focused on the theme of effectiveness measures for public libraries.

Stayner[114] in a research study utilising multiple regression techniques, investigated the association between recorded level of usage of certain Victorian public libraries (measured by circulation statistics) and levels of resources in those libraries. Stayner found a consistently high association between the two variables:

> *'level of use is effectively constrained by the quantity of resources available. This is consistent with the hypothesis that excess demand for public library service exists; that is, if further resources were made available, they would be "converted" into use. While this may appear a trivial or at least self-evident statement, it is contrary to the implications of placing too much emphasis on the rather missionary objective of increasing the proportion of registered borrowers in the population.'* [115]

In another study for the Library Council of Victoria, Ramsden in 1975 utilised a range of performance measures, primarily based on those of De Prospo et al, to investigate performance of eight Victorian public library systems - four regional libraries, and four single library authorities. He sought to measure for the LCV the adequacy of library services in output / performance terms; and to demonstrate whether larger regional units were more efficient and cost effective than smaller units. Measures utilised included three measures of title availability based on sample lists; measures of availability of journals and nonbook materials; three means of evaluating reference services (a checklist of basic recommended reference sources; an analysis of client queries kept by reference staff; and an unobtrusive study, where a series of reference questions was put to each library by telephone); several measures of patterns of library use (effective user hours; effective equipment usage; and extent of queuing at the reference and circulation desks); and staffing ratios. Ramsden found clear evidence for the cost effectiveness of larger regional units.

More recently (1984), McIntyre undertook a pilot study[116] for the LCV on the feasibility of implementing some of the performance measures outlined in the 1982 ALA manual *Output*

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111 ibid., p. 99.

112 Ernest R.De Prospo, Ellen Altman, & K. E. Beasley,*Performance measures for public libraries*, A.L.A., Chicago, c1973.

113 D. Zweizig, & E.J. Rodger, *Output measures for public libraries*, A.L.A., Chicago, 1982.

114 Richard A. Stayner, *Relationships between resources and use of Victorian public libraries : report on a research study for the Library Council of Victoria* , LCV, Melbourne, 1981.

115 ibid., p. 44.

116 L. Barry. McIntyre,*Output measures for public libraries : report of a Victorian pilot study 1984*, Library Council of Victoria, Melbourne, 1986.

measures for public libraries (Zweizig and Rodger) in two Victorian regional library systems. McIntyre sought measures which were less time consuming and cumbersome than some of De Prospo's measures - easy for librarians untrained in research techniques to implement. The trial established the feasibility of implementing the recent U.S. methodology, with only minor changes needed for the Victorian scene. Measures used included circulation per capita; inlibrary materials use per capita; library visits per capita; program attendance per capita; reference transactions per capita; reference fill rate; title fill rate; subject and author fill rate; browser's fill rate; borrower registrations as a percentage of the population; turnover rate; and document delivery measures. The methods used constituted an important supplementary means of measuring library performance to statistics currently collected throughout the State. However, McIntyre warned that attention did need to be given to clarifying some of the definitions, e.g. a reference query, to ensure comparable data for all public libraries. One problem with much academic research is its lack of any real lasting impact on practitioners. To overcome this, McIntyre has recently organised a systematic training program for public librarians on how to implement the techniques used in his study, and how to interpret resultant figures / statistics.

Over recent years, the Victorian Government has worked towards the professionalisation of public administration. This has included the gradual introduction of program budgeting throughout Government departments, where measures of output are related to inputs / investments. In this climate, reliable output measures will become increasingly important for public libraries. To quote McIntyre:

> *'No longer will they [public libraries] be able to rely as heavily on an unquestioning public acceptance of the inherent social value of free public library service as they have in the past. Furthermore, current proposals for block grant funding assume that municipalities would have to achieve and maintain certain standards of service to qualify for grants. Standards based on measurement of program output would logically be a component of such an eligibility prerequitise.'* [117]

Over the past few years, LAA industrial action on the Federal funding for public libraries issue has continued, but with a different emphasis to the early campaigns. Current efforts are marked by a sense of pragmatic realism - an acknowledgement of the tight budgetary situation, and the negligible chance of success of any appeals for a massive general injection of Federal funds into public libraries. Rather, lobbying has become more focused, more attuned to particular areas of growth identified in Government policy documents. For instance, consider the following extract from the 1986 LAA *Annual report:*

> *'The Commonwealth Assistance to Public Libraries Campaign prepared a submission on assistance to multicultural public library services and this was presented to the Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services (the Jupp Review). The Association also employed a lobbyist to assist in the CAPL campaign and held meetings in most states to launch the submission. By the end of the year it was anticipated that there might be a possibility of some funding in connection with the National Language Policy initiative.'* [118]

> *'The Association also promoted public libraries as centres for the distribution of government information and organised for the distribution of drug information, free government materials and the sale of AGPS material through a number of libraries on a trial basis. The use of public libraries to distribute this information led to a greater recognition by public servants of the wide distribution capabilities of public libraries.'* [119]

At the State level, the uncertain future of public library funding has triggered unprecedented industrial unrest and political agitation amongst librarians and library technicians working in public libraries:

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117 ibid., p. 2.

118 Library Association of Australia. *Annual report 1986.* LAA, Ultimo, N.S.W. [1987], p. 6.

119 ibid., pp. 6 - 7.

'Municipal library staff in Victoria were forced to resort to industrial action in the first part of 1986 when their claims for a new classification for library technicians and salary rises for librarians were rejected by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV). A 24-hour strike was held and a campaign of rolling stoppages was implemented. The LAA's Industrial Information and Research Officer attended a meeting of members of the Municipal Officers' Association which was called to discuss the claims and addressed the stop-work meeting on 20 May. Additionally, the LAA wrote to every Council in Victoria seeking their support.

'The Municipal Association of Victoria eventually acceded to the demands of library staff and a new classification, providing for two levels of library technicians, was inserted into the Award. The MAV also agreed to salary increases of up to 10.8% for librarians working in municipal libraries.

'The LAA worked closely in conjunction with the Municipal Officers' Association on both these matters and was gratified with the result.' [120]

The formation of a pressure group - SOLV (Survival Of Libraries in Victoria) - in 1986 has provided a strong focus of lobbying efforts to the State Government on public library issues. Part of SOLV's platform has been the case for the restoration of the traditional 50% State: 50% local government funding of public libraries, which has been eroded substantially over the past four or five years, with local government contributing at least two thirds of funds in many localities. In late 1986, the Minister for the Arts, Race Mathews, foreshadowed substantial cuts of approximately $2 million p.a. in State Government subsidies to public libraries, from c. $17.6 million to c. $15.6 million p.a. The uproar this announcement provoked, and the strength of the resultant concerted lobbying and media campaign organised by the SOLV group and public library users generally, no doubt caught the Minister by surprise. In the recent 1987 / 88 August State Budget, the $16.7 million allocation for public library subsidy, although $900,000 short of maintaining existing funding levels indexed for inflation, which SOLV was campaigning for, represented an undeniable victory for the campaign. However, as a recent *Incite* article explains:

'There will still be a serious impact as libraries across Victoria face a 13% shortfall in the State contribution . . . ."

'The fact that only some funds have been restored will mean that library services will still be affected. Purchase of new books will be reduced, existing charges will increase, and new charges such as membership fees will be examined. The possibility of new branch libraries will be ruled out in areas of growing population. The overall level of State funding will remain a contentious issue between the Government and the library industry, until progress is made towards 50:50 funding.' [121]

Several consultants' reports have recently been commissioned to serve as input to a State Government revamped policy on funding for public libraries. Working on the basis of the proposed $2 million cut for the 1987 / 88 financial year, Sylvia Geddes (Project Director) and Margaret Goode (Senior Consultant) from the Management Improvement Division of the Public Service Board of Victoria were commissioned in December 1986 to develop for the Minister's consideration:

(1) a range of options for funding public libraries in Victoria; and

(2) *'options setting out changes which could improve the cost effectiveness, coordination and integration of the delivery of library services through State Government libraries, the State Library, public libraries, and primary, secondary and tertiary education libraries in Victoria.'* [122]

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120 Ibid., p. 10.

121 Alasdair Wardle quoted in 'Victoria's problems unSOLVed', *Incite*, vol. 8, no. 15, 4 Sept. 1987, p.1.

122 *Libraries review : first report to the Minister for the Arts : options for State Government funding of municipal public libraries in Victoria*, [The First Geddes Report], Management Improvement Division, Public Service Board of Victoria, [Melbourne], April 1987, p. 2.

Restricted to a tight time schedule, the consultants tabled their *First Report to the Minister for the Arts*, dealing with the first of the two terms of reference listed above, in April 1987; and the *Second Report . . .* (on the second term of reference) three months later in July. [123] Any evaluation of the Geddes Reports needs to bear in mind both the limited time scale of their compilation, and the a priori assumptions upon which they were based - the Minister's directives that funding cuts of c. $2 million p.a. would proceed; and that book lending should remain free of user charges, but that any other services may be candidates for fees. The Reports are very much a blueprint for how the Government's proposals could be achieved, rather than an analysis and discussion of underlying principles / issues. Hence there are some inevitable logical inconsistencies evident in arguments presented, e.g. where information recorded in one form remains free, while that in another form may be charged for.

The First Report, which begins with an analysis of the respective roles of State and local governments in funding public libraries, conveys the impression that the State is attempting to opt out of its historical responsibilities towards public libraries, expecting local government to pick up the burden. The authors stressed strongly local government's '*prime responsibility for the provision of library services* ',and defined State responsibilities in terms of a lesser, background, coordinating and supportive role - ensuring of viable framework of public library services within the State; encouraging effective performance and high rates of usage of public libraries; and assisting libraries with special needs (e.g. a new library with special developmental needs for materials or computer equipment) or disadvantages which result in high service delivery costs (e.g. in some rural areas or in areas with high proportions of non-English speaking residents). Geddes' basic recommendation for funding was that the existing per capita formula for State subsidy be phased out over 3 - 5 years, being replaced ultimately by a situation where 15% of available State funds are retained as special purpose grants; and 85% are allocated on a 1:1 State : local government matching basis, according to a formula which comprises performance / level of use and needs / disability criteria, and subject to certain restrictive conditions, i.e.:

- the submission of annual accountability reports;
- the employment of appropriately qualified staff;
- the guarantee of no user charges for book lending; and
- the extension of reciprocal borrowing rights to non-residents (to maximise community access to information services).

One issue raised in the First Report, but developed further in the Second, is that public libraries are just one element in a wider network of publicly funded library and information services - and that, to improve cost effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of information services, more attention needs to be devoted to developing links between each sector, encouraging cross sector cooperation and optimal usage of all nodes in the network.

Between public libraries and school libraries, the consultants observed, there was already a good deal of valuable cooperation, e.g. the 13 joint-use library facilities based in schools, but run in conjunction with public libraries; and public library bookmobiles making stops outside schools. Such ventures were consistent with the devolution of responsibilities from centralised to regional / local control which had taken place in many other Government services. However, the Report highlighted some areas of unnecessary duplication of effort; service gaps; and inadequate consultation / liaison between schools and public libraries (e.g. on curriculum changes). The TAFE and tertiary sectors also offered considerable potential for cross sector cooperation. The consultants were impressed with the extent of innovative, entrepreneurial activity and voluntary cooperative schemes / associations developed amongst these sectors (e.g. TAFENET, COOL-CAT, LIBNET, Southguide; CAVAL, CAUL, ALCAE), and felt that these could provide a model for the development of similar schemes amongst public libraries. An independent, nongovernment cooperative like CAVAL had the advantages of flexibility and responsiveness to environmental demands, and the potential for entrepreneurial activity difficult in government based operations. In this time of reduced funding, the consultants stressed the need for public libraries to expand their revenue base;

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123 *Libraries review : second report to the Minister for the Arts : discussion paper : improving service delivery in publicly funded library services in Victoria*, [The Second Geddes Report], Management Improvement Division, Public Service Board of Victoria, [Melbourne] ,June 1987.

to re-examine traditional assumptions on sources of funding; to make bids for funding from a variety of sources; and to increase their cost effectiveness through improved management practices, e.g. the introduction of program budgeting, and the rigorous application of performance / output measures based on the minimum number of key indicators which best measure performance. Some of the consultants' suggestions on how public librarians might diversify and increase their revenue base included:

- enlisting community support in enhancing library services, e.g. through the establishment of 'Friends of the Library ' groups; approaching local business for specific purpose funding; or employing a professional fund raiser.
- exploring opportunities for additional sources of revenue, e.g. acting as an agency for AGPS publications; as a collection centre for local Council charges out of hours; participating in Commonwealth and State training and work experience programs.
- using the library as a venue for community activities - meetings, exhibitions, etc.
- providing non-library services to those on the premises, e.g. telephones, a coffee shop, dispensing machines.
- treating library users as a potential market, e.g. fundraising, soliciting corporate sponsorship, using touchscreen terminals for consumer advertising.
- charging for general library services, e.g. an annual membership fee.
- charging for specific library services, especially for those using computer based technologies.
- developing entrepreneurial activities such as specialised commercial / business information services, including online searches and bibliographic work (e.g. INFORMIT, AMIC, Westdoc, Eastdoc, Southguide).

Since the release of the Geddes Reports, a number of small working groups have been established to investigate certain issues and to develop implementation plans, e.g. deciding on precise formulas for fund allocation; investigating the interlibrary loans issue.

The Second Geddes Report implies that the Library Council of Victoria structure, set up by State Government legislation in 1965 to administer the State Library, public libraries and government department libraries, has outlived its usefulness. With its strong centralist and interventionist tendencies, it runs counter to general moves away from centrally run State services towards regionally based structures, and individual cooperative and contractual arrangements. The Geddes Report foreshadowed the replacement of the Consultancy and Public Library Services division of the Library Council of Victoria with a small Libraries and Information Services Policy and Stategy Unit (LISPSU) of three to five people, and a voluntary Advisory Group on Library and Information Services, comprised of c. 7 - 11 representatives from various library and information service sectors. The administration of State government department libraries was formally moved from the LCV structure in 1985 / 86, with librarians' salaries transfered to their Departments, a move which the consultants believed should encourage librarians to immerse themselves more in the culture and operations of their departments, and to provide better quality, more integrated information services to their organisations.

The long awaited recommendations of the State Library Development Study (the Hancock Report)[124], released in late September 1987, supported and extended the basic thrust of the Geddes recommendations, arguing that the State Library of Victoria should be a single, autonomous entity, with its own Board, Trustees, and Director - rather than dissipating its energies by acting also as the controlling element in the State's public library system. The Report envisaged the reinstatement of the SLV to some of the 'glory ' of its former years, with a strong emphasis on reference, research and specialised information services; a strengthening of its collections - both in terms of investing a considerable amount on the

[124] J. Arnold Hancock, *The State Library Development Study*, Melbourne, 1987.

conservation of rapidly deteriorating older materials, and in developing a current collection which is more responsive to user needs, and with greater strength in scientific and technological areas; stimulating, market oriented programs and services; and a highly qualified professional and managerial staff who provide other libraries leadership by example rather than by direction. Considerable emphasis was placed on the need to develop cooperative activity, joint ventures and interaction with other libraries / organisations, e.g. RMIT, Melbourne City Libraries; computer based technical systems, including an effective means of materials delivery within the Library; and entrepreneurial information services, including some operating on a 'fee for service' basis. The need for suitable accommodation, including appropriate environmental control, was also highlighted.

2.7 THE ROLE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS: IMPLICATIONS OF SOME RECENT AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENTS

Much of the rhetoric one hears on the relative roles of academic, public and other libraries in the tertiary student's life is based on an overly simplistic, idealised world view, and ignores much of the reality of student information seeking behaviour. While statements emanating from professional bodies on what library and information services students should use might satisfy the professional librarian's yearning for a neat, well ordered network of library and information services, with each node performing its own clearly defined function, an analysis of research into the wide variety of information sources students do use swiftly shatters such illusions.

Consider, for instance, the following extracts from an AACOBS statement, relayed via the Public Libraries Division of the Library Council of Victoria in a circular letter to public librarians in March 1983:

> *' The fundamental responsibility for provision of the books and other course-related material for tertiary students rests with the library of the academic institution at which they are enrolled. . . .'*
>
> *' The public library' s responsibility is to the community as a whole. Provision by purchase or interlibrary loan of material required for formal courses of study is not, in general, part of this responsibility. Students requiring this type of material should therefore refer to their own academic institution.'* [125]

Certainly, no-one would dispute that the primary responsibility for library services to students lies with the individual institution . However, when students have tried, unsuccessfully, to locate particular titles or relevant items in their own academic libraries, they will commence a systematic search of other information sources available to them, in the hope of tracking down the desired material. Public libraries constitute one of those alternative sources. Another case in point involves the current debate over whether or not public libraries should procure interlibrary loans for students, currently at a $6 unit cost, when students have been denied access to interlibrary loans through their own academic institutions - a situation most prevalent amongst university undergraduates. Naturally, if a student has a pressing need for a particular item, s/he will seek out whatever other possibilities there are for procuring that item.

The financial crisis of the past decade - shrinking budgets; the sharp devaluation of the Australian dollar; and soaring inflation rates - has had a devastating impact on all Australian libraries. With most libraries reliant on overseas suppliers for the major portion (at least 80%) of their acquisitions, purchasing power has dropped dramatically. Far fewer book and nonbook materials are being acquired each year; and many libraries have implemented mass serial cancellation programs. Recent statistics for Victorian public libraries show that, while the acquisitions rate has dropped substantially since 1979, total loans have continued to rise

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[125] Library Council of Victoria, Public Libraries Division, Circular [letter] 83/10, 16 March, 1983.

significantly each year[126]. Each library and library sector, searches valiantly for a solution to its apparently insurmountable financial difficulties. Massive funding increases are no longer an option Perhaps the elusive answer may lie in a broadening of the funding base; more entrepreneurial activities; user charges; productivity gains; or perhaps increased inter-sector and cross-sector cooperation.

'Interlibrary cooperation' was a catchcry of the 1960s, a time of rapid growth of library collections, but amidst the 'knowledge / publications explosion', when it was realised that no library could achieve self-sufficiency. Calls for increased cooperative activity are being made again now, but for different reasons - primarily as a possible palliative for the economic woes besetting all libraries. This was a major thrust of the recent CTEC (Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commision) report for the coming triennium (1988-1990) and is illustrated in the following extracts:[127]

> *'The two problems of rationalising holdings in libraries, and of providing space to store collections, raise the question of the future pattern of development of university libraries, and, in particular, the extent to which the survival of an adequate library system will depend on regional cooperation between libraries serving higher education.*
>
> *'These include not only the libraries in the universities and the advanced education institutions, but also the public libraries, whose holdings and facilities are of considerable value to academics and students. The growth of knowlege has resulted in a proliferation of books and journals . . . . The increase in participation in higher education has placed heavy demands on libraries both for increasing undergraduate collections and for providing workspace. . . .'*
>
> *' The Council could respond by simply advocating a massive increase in funding to libraries so that they can restore or maintain the services expected of them in past years. But if libraries continue to develop in the same ways as before, their costs will escalate, and the 1991 - 93 triennium will confront us with the problems of 1988 -90 writ even larger. The Council believes that libraries should be encouraged to continue developing means of regional cooperation so that even if an individual institution's library cannot provide a full range of information and services to its users, satisfactory services will be available on a regional basis. . . .'*
>
> *'The Council . . . recommends that the CTEC carry out a review of the library system in higher education which should address the following issues:*
>
> *(a) the extent to which regional and national cooperation exists between libraries in the purchasing of materials and the provision of services to users, and ways in which such cooperation can be improved;*
>
> *(b) the means by which cooperation between libraries in higher education institutions and the public library system can be increased;*
>
> *(c) the accessibility of library material in one institution to users in another institution, not only via the system of interlibrary loans but by making the catalogues of libraries available to users in all universities;*
>
> *(d) the role of new information technologies in the provision of library services; and*
>
> *(e) the problem of storage of material in libraries and whether economical solutions can be achieved by regional cooperation.*

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126 Library Council of Victoria, Consultancy and Public Services Division, *PL news*, Issue 18, August 1987.

127 Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, Universities Advisory Council, *Report for the 1988-90 triennium*, vol. 1, part 3, 'Advice', AGPS, Canberra, April 1987. Sections 3.94 - 3.99, pp. 60 - 61.

> *'One matter which could receive immediate attention and which would help alleviate the storage problem in libraries, is the provision of study space for students outside library buildings. Libraries are costly to build because they need floors which will bear heavy loads and, in many cases, require air conditioning. Many students study in the library because it is the only place available, not because they need to use books or other library materials. It would be cheaper to provide other study space for these students than to extend the library.'*

As seen in the last Section, similar issues have been raised by Haratsis, Geddes and others. Public libraries do serve an important function in the network of information sources used by students - they are used by students at all levels, yet they are certainly not funded sufficiently to provide collections adequate to the demands placed on them by students. The time is ripe for research into the role public libraries play in the educational process, to provide some precise, quantitative data on the extent of student usage of public library collections. The current research has been designed to this end. In any planning towards the rationalisation of library services, and the potential for both inter-sector and cross-sector cooperation, an understanding of the relative roles played by different types of library and information services in the lives of students is essential. Also, if this study demonstrates a significant incidence of student usage of public library collections for course related purposes, there would seem to be a case for pursuing Haratsis's suggestion of the possibility of supplementary funding for public libraries from State and Federal Education budgets.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY, DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 CHOICE OF METHODOLOGY

Considering the broad aims of the research outlined in Chapter 1, a survey methodology was essential. Kidder defined survey research as '*The research strategy where one collects data from all or part of a population to assess the relative incidence, distribution, and interrelations of naturally occurring variables.*' The main function of a survey according to Line is to provide '*. . . an overview of a field, and is thus distinguished from the sort of study which consists of a microscopic examination of the turf. It is a map rather than a detailed plan.*' [1]

The primary function of this research was to provide such a 'map', to highlight general trends and issues which could be examined further in subsequent, more focused, library specific studies.

For this investigation, responses from a large number of tertiary students, representative of all types, levels and years of courses, different study modes, fields of subject specialisation, and age groups in Melbourne tertiary institutions were needed. A mail questionnaire was the only feasible and economic way to reach such a large and geographically dispersed sample in a limited period of time.

Despite their advantages, the unfortunate corollary of any general mail survey is its typically low response rate, which affects the external validity / generalisability of results.

3.2 FORMULATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

In late April, 1986, the researcher, with some input from professional colleagues and students from the Research Methods class, drew up the first draft of the questionnaire, along the lines outlined in Section 1.2. Under severe time constraints to meet printing deadlines and to mail the questionnaires by mid-May, only a limited 'piloting' of the questionnaire was possible. Copies were sent to several librarians working in tertiary and public libraries for comment. Others were distributed amongst Research Methods students and academic staff in the Department of Information Services, RMIT. As a result of this, several changes were made to the questionnaire. A copy of the final version, along with the cover letter, is presented as **Appendix A** .

The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

Section A , to be completed by all respondents, elicited background information on tertiary institution attended; mode of study; level and year of course; field of subject specialisation; age group; types of libraries used, and frequency of that usage.

Section B focused on usage of the student's own university or college library, with questions on purposes for which the library was used; resources, services and facilities used; degree of satisfaction with materials provision, materials availability, user education, staff assistance, study areas, and provision of interlibrary loans; and awareness and usage of the reciprocal borrowing scheme operating amongst tertiary libraries in Melbourne.

Section C, 'Usage of the local public library ', to be filled in only by those who used their public libraries, contained questions on public library membership; purposes for which public libraries were used; resources, services and facilities used; reasons why those who used the public library for course related purposes did so; the proportion of the library resources they used for study which came from the public library; ratings of the overall quality of service, and of particular service areas in public libraries; comparative ratings of services in the public

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[1] Maurice B. Line, *Library surveys*, 2nd edn., Bingley, London, 1982, p. 12.

library and the student's own university or college library; and how prepared the student had found public library staff were to assist a tertiary student.

Provision was made at the end of the questionnaire for 'other comments', an invitation that was taken up by more than one third of respondents.

Inevitably, the failure to implement a full scale pilot test on a random sample of tertiary students had its costs in terms of some questions being misinterpreted. The problems which became evident at the data analysis stage were:

Question 2 should have been divided into two questions, one on internal vs. external mode; the other on full time vs. part time status. However, as only eleven of a total of 1,031 (or 1.1% of) respondents were enrolled in external mode, this problem had relatively little effect on overall results.

Section C - the phrase 'local public library', chosen to distinguish the library from the State Library, created confusion with a few respondents who used public libraries other than the ones nearest their homes.

Question 12 'Are you a member of your local public library?' would have been better given as the last question in Section A rather than as the first question in Section C. The only impact of this placement on results would have been that currently registered public library members who did not use the public library may not have answered the question at all, and have been recorded as 'Missing cases', hence slightly understating the incidence of public library registrations amongst respondents. However, again, it is likely that only a few cases were involved.

Questions 15 and 16 - an explicit instruction should have been given immediately preceding these questions 'Fill in this question **only** if you use the public library for course related purposes'. This omission caused a small proportion of respondents who did not use their public libraries for study purposes to tick the 'less than 10%' category rather than omitting the question altogether. This issue and its impact on responses is discussed at some length in Section 4.55.

Question 21 - The question should have commenced with the word 'If' rather than "when"; and should have contained a response option: 'The situation has never arisen'.

With hindsight, it is easy to identify problems with a research instrument. Even with a formal pretest, some problems frequently creep through, and are not detected until the data analysis stage. Fortunately, the problems identified above (except Question 16) involved relatively few cases and had only a minimal impact on overall results.

3.3 SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE

Selecting a random sample of Melbourne tertiary students involved a two stage process. As there is no central register of all currently enrolled tertiary students, one must firstly select the institutions, and then make separate arrangements with each institution for a random sample of its students.

Five tertiary institutions were purposively selected to give a cross section of tertiary education in Melbourne, taking into consideration type of institution, courses taught, and geographical location. Two of Melbourne's three universities were included: the University of Melbourne, the oldest university in Victoria, located on the perimeter of the central business district; and La Trobe University, the newest of Melbourne's three universities, situated in an outer northern suburb. Of the three colleges of advanced education included, one (Melbourne College of Advanced Education) was established as a teachers' college, although over recent years its courses have diversified; and two as multidisciplinary 'Institutes of Technology' (Swinburne I T and Footscray I T). Melbourne C A E is situated adjacent to the University of Melbourne, on the northern side of the city. Swinburne I T is located in an inner eastern suburb, and Footscray I T in an inner western suburb.

In determining the size of the sample, the need for a sufficient number of responses for valid statistical inference, and the frequently low response rate for mail questionnaires were taken into consideration. A minimum of 400 - 500 responses was deemed necessary for meaninglul statistical inference. If the response rate were as iow as that reported for some general survey mailings (20 % - 25%), this would necessitate a sample of about 2,000 cases. As the combined enrolment of the five tertiary institutions was in the vicinity of 40,000, a one in twenty (i.e. a 5%) random sample of currently enrolled students would yield the desired sample size of 2,000.

Due to concern over the need to guarantee confidentiality of student records, each institution had its own procedure for dealing with surveys. Some were handled through the Registrar's Department, with or without the involvement of Research Methods students; others through library records. Two institutions produced sets of computer generated labels. The others required the checking of lists, extracting each twentieth entry (after the first entry had been randomly selected), and manually transcribing names to envelopes for mailing.

Although the procedures for selecting the sample varied amongst the five institutions, the final outcome with each was a one in twenty random sample of all currently enrolled students. Outlined in **Table 1** are the [approximate] total enrolments for 1986 at each institution, and numbers of questionnaires mailed from each.

TABLE 1 : NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES MAILED, BY INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	1986 ENROLMENTS	NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES MAILED
University of Melbourne	15,500	775
La Trobe University	9,820	491
Melbourne C A E	4,100	205
Swinburne I T	6,480	324
Footscray I T	4,020	201
TOTAL	39,920	1,996

3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

To obviate the need for double handling of lists, two envelopes were addressed for each case at the outset - one containing the questionnaire, cover letter, and an RMIT prepaid return envelope; the other to be kept for a single follow up letter, if necessary.

Questionnaires were mailed to students from Swinburne I T, Melbourne C A E and the University of Melbourne between May 20 and May 23, 1986; and from Footscray I T on May 28. The mailing from La Trobe University was held up due to a heavy workload in the Registrar's Department, and was not sent till close to the due date given on the cover letter - Friday, June 6.

Methodology

A single follow up letter was sent to non-respondents on June 26 and 27. (See Appendix B for a copy of the letter). While it was realised that two or three follow up letters would have increased the response rate significantly (perhaps by at least 10% - 15%), financial and time constraints prevented this.

Two of the institutions, Footscray I T and La Trobe University, elected to include their own cover letters with the questionnaire, as well as the RMIT cover letter.(See Appendix C for copies of these two letters).

3.5 RESPONSE RATE

A total of 1,996 questionnaires were mailed. 28 were returned as undeliverable. Most of these were annotated 'Return to sender. Not known at this address'. A few had other stories to tell: several students were overseas, and not returning till later in the year; a couple were no longer involved in tertiary studies; one questionnaire was returned with the note - '. . . has had a serious accident and is in hospital'; and another ' I'm sorry to tell you that . . . died in April'. These returns reduced the original sample to 1,968 cases.

In all, 1,031 responses were received, a 52.4% response rate. Prior to the mailing of the follow up letter, 854 cases had returned questionnaires, a 43.4% return rate, i.e. the mailing of the follow up letter yielded an additional 9.0% response.

Table 2 gives a breakdown of response rates by institution. Twenty of the 1,031 cases failed to designate which institution they attended: these constitute the twenty 'missing cases' in the Table. Twelve respondents indicated institutions other than the five to which questionnaires were mailed. This could be attributable to students being currently enrolled at more than one tertiary institution, or to the questionnaire being passed on to another student to fill in. These 32 cases, and also the fact that the 28 undeliverable questionnaires are included in the calculation, mean that the response rates for each institution are likely to be slightly understated. The discrepant figure for La Trobe University's response rate is likely to be due to the relatively late mailing of questionnaires, and / or to the nature of the additional cover letter included by the University.

TABLE 2 : RESPONSE RATES, BY INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES MAILED	NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED	RESPONSE RATE (%)
University of Melbourne	775	427	55.1
La Trobe University	491	171	34.8
Melbourne C A E	205	109	53.2
Swinburne I T	324	167	51.5
Footscray I T	201	125	62.2
TOTAL	1,996	999	-

Missing cases = 32

Table 3 details the response rates for each institution before and after the mailing of the follow up letter.

TABLE 3 : RESPONSE RATES, BY INSTITUTION, BEFORE AND AFTER THE MAILING OF THE FOLLOW UP LETTER

INSTITUTION	Number of questionnaires received prior to mailing the follow up letter	Response rate [%]	Number of questionnaires received after mailing the follow up letter	Overall % increase	Final response rate (%)
Uni. of Melbourne	378	48.8	49	6.3	55.1
La Trobe University	130	26.5	41	8.3	34.8
Melbourne C A E	93	45.4	16	7.8	53.2
Swinburne I T	145	44.7	22	6.8	51.5
Footscray I T	82	40.8	43	21.4	62.2
TOTAL	828	42.8	171	8.9	51.7
	Missing cases = 26		Missing cases = 6		

It is interesting to note that the follow up letter yielded a markedly higher response rate from students from Footscray I T than from other institutions - approximately three times greater. The fact that questionnaires were mailed to Footscray I T students a week later than students from Swinburne I T, the University of Melbourne, or Melbourne C A E may explain this in part, with students being reassured that, although the original due date had passed, their responses were still of value. However, the La Trobe University mailing was later still, but yielded only a marginal increase in response rate with the follow up letter - compared with the other institutions.

This discrepancy may be better explained by the nature of the cover letters (additional to the RMIT one accompanying the questionnaire) included by both Footscray I T and LaTrobe University. The cover letter from Footscray I T firmly linked the Footscray I T Library with the survey, indicating that the data generated would assist the Library in improving its own services to students. On the other hand, La Trobe University 's cover letter, emanating from the Registrar's Department, did not urge student participation, leaving the decision of whether or not to become involved very much up to each student, and failing to indicate any potential benefits from participation. This possible link between type of cover letter and response rate is worthy of investigation in subsequent research.

3.6 CODING THE DATA

The questionnaire was designed to facilitate coding for data anatysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Most questions were in fixed response format, although there was some provision made for 'Other' responses to many questions, and for 'Other comments' at the end of the questionnaire.

When questionnaires were returned, each Research Methods student was asked to code up fifty questionnaires onto coding sheets for subsequent input by RMIT Professional Keypunch Service staff to the Cyber mainframe computer. A 'codebook' was drawn up by the researcher as a guide for coders . For each question, numbers coded corresponded with the alternative

ticked by the respondent. A zero (0) was used when a question was inapplicable to the respondent. For questions where respondents specified 'Other' options, and for 'Other comments' in Question 22, coders were asked to transcribe comments verbatim for subsequent analysis by the researcher.

When the coding was completed, coding sheets were checked for any obvious errors or inconsistencies and some corrections made. A further check was made when the entire data file was 'up' on the computer. At this stage, some mistranscriptions and omissions of numbers by keypunchers were identified, and remedied, prior to running the program against the data file.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

As mentioned in the last section, the survey was designed for analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, Version 9. SPSS is an integrated system of computer programs for the analysis of social science data. It provides for a wide variety of statistical routines commonly performed in the social sciences, e.g. frequency distributions, correlation measures, Chi square and other nonparametric statistical tests. Unlike earlier SPSS versions, Version 9 is interactive, enabling online input and manipulation of data.

The SPSS 'Frequencies' subprogram was used to generate frequency tables for each variable, and the 'Crosstabs' subprogram to compile tables of crosstabulations for many variables. Given the large number of cases involved, many crosstabulations yielded results which were statistically significant. For further information on statistical measures used in data analysis *see* Section 4.12.

CHAPTER FOUR RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Results have been aggregated into six main areas, based on the broad sequence of the questionnaire.

(1) **Profile of respondents** - in terms of tertiary institution attended; mode of study; level and year of course; field of subject specialisation; and age group.

(2) **Types of libraries used, and frequency of that usage** - for the student's own univeristy or college library; any other academic libraries used; the State Library of Victoria; the local public library; a library at work; libraries of clubs or social groups; the Council of Adult Education Library; and any other libraries used. This section concludes with an analysis of the relationship between field of subject specialisation and the amount and frequency of library use.

(3) **Usage of university or college libraries** - including major reasons for using university or college libraries; resources, services and facilities used; degree of satisfaction with academic library services; and use of reciprocal borrowing.

(4) **Usage of public libraries** - public library membership; major reasons for using public libraries; resources, services and facilities used; reasons behind the usage of public libraries for course related purposes; proportion of library resources used for study coming from public libraries; ratings of the quality of service overall; and of particular resources, services and facilities in public libraries; comparative ratings of the quality of services provided by academic and public libraries; and attitudes of public library staff towards students.

(5) **'Other comments'** More than one third of respondents took the opportunity to add their own comments on many aspects of library services. These have been categorised into comments on university and college libraries (general observations on academic library services; specific comments relating to library services at each institution; and suggestions for improving academic library services); comments on public library services (the relative roles of academic and public libraries in the lives of students; difficulties encountered by students in using public libraries; overall evaluation of public library services; and suggestions for improving those services); comments on other libraries, especially the State Library of Victoria; and comments on the questionnaire itself.

(6) **Summary of results**.

Reporting of statistics

In the reporting of results, and in tables, adjusted frequency percentages have generally been used in preference to relative frequencies, i.e. excluding from the calculation of statistics those who failed to answer a question (inadvertently or deliberately), or those for whom a question was inapplicable (e.g. for a student who was a non-user of the public library, all questions pertaining to public library usage). However, in parts of one section - Section 4.3 - on frequency of usage of different types of library, relative frequencies have been used, with 'missing cases' added to the 'I never use it' category, for reasons explained there.

Because of the 'missing cases', the actual number of valid cases for each question usually falls short of the possible total of 1,031. Both the number of valid cases, and the number of missing cases, are given at the base of each table, e.g. N = 1,007 Missing cases = 24.

Due to the rounding of numbers to one decimal place, percentages given in tables do not always total 100.0% exactly, e.g. 99.9% or 100.1%.

Results

Crosstabulations, or joint frequency distributions of two variables, have been used extensively in the reporting of results, to explore possible relationships between variables, and hence to provide further insights into the raw frequencies data for each question. To enable statistical analysis of this data, two statistical measures are given for each crosstabulation table: Chi square and Cramer's V. The Chi square statistic is a widely used test of statistical significance for nominal level data, which determines whether a systematic relationship exists between two variables. The SPSS program automatically calculates the Chi square value for each table and the associated level of significance.

It was decided at the outset to set a .05 level of significance for all results: that is, in concluding that a systematic relationship exists between the variables, to tolerate a 5% likelihood that the observed relationship has occured by chance. Attributable in part to the large number of cases involved, many crosstabulations turned out to be statistically significant even at the .0001 level (i.e. where the probability of error is one in 10,000). While the Chi square statistic indicates if a relationship exists between the variables, it does not show the strength of the relationship, for which a measure of association is used. Cramer's V, a modified version of phi test suited to large tables of nominal data was the measure of association selected. 'V' values range from 0 to 1. It is worth stressing that, with social science data, V values rarely exceed 0.4, and in most cases are less than 0.3.

4.2 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

4.21 Tertiary institution attended

See the Methodology section, particularly Sections 3.3 and 3.5 for a profile of respondents in terms of tertiary institution attended.

4.22 Mode of study

Respondents were asked to indicate if they were full time, part time, or external students. Table 4 outlines the numbers and percentages of respondents in each category.

TABLE 4 : MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Full time student	728	71.2
Part time student	283	27.7
External student	11	1.1
TOTAL	1022	100.0

Missing cases = 9

As numbers of external students are too small for any valid conclusions to be drawn, subsequent analysis will concentrate primarily on full time and part time students. Restricting institutions surveyed to those in the Melbourne metropolitan area did limit significantly the number of external students included. Relatively few tertiary institutions in Melbourne focus to any significant degree on external studies, which is more the prerogative of tertiary

institutions in the provincial cities, e.g. Deakin University in Geelong [Victoria]; Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education in Churchill in the Latrobe Valley [Victoria]; Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education in Wagga Wagga, south New South Wales; or University of New England, Armidale, N.S.W. As the topic under investigation is of particular relevance to external students, a follow up project of similar scope to this research, but targeting specifically off campus students, is currently underway at RMIT at the time of writing (September, 1987).

The distribution of full time, part time and external students in each of the institutions is presented in Table 5 below.

TABLE 5 : MODE OF STUDY BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	MODE OF STUDY			TOTAL STUDENTS	
	Full time student %	Part time student %	External student %	%	No.
University of Melbourne	81.7	18.1	0.2	100.0	426
La Trobe University	67.1	31.8	1.2	100.1	170
Melbourne C A E	68.8	25.7	5.5	100.0	109
Swinburne I T	53.0	47.0	-	100.0	166
Footscray I T	73.4	25.8	0.8	100.0	124

N = 995
Missing cases = 36
Chi square = 85.26608, df = 10, significance = 0.0000

To test the representativeness of this data in terms of proportions of full time and part time students in the broader population, the ratios of part time students to full time students were determined for the survey data, and compared with ratios derived from library statistics given for each institution in the *1985 AARL Library statistics supplement*[1], the latest issue available at the time of writing. While the part time: full time ratio does vary significantly from one institution to another and to a lesser extent from one year to the next in the one institution, it was felt that this comparison should provide a rough indicator of any bias in the data. Table 6 outlines these findings. It can be seen that full time students are proportionately significantly overrepresented, and, conversely, part time students are proportionately significantly underrepresented in the results for each institution, a fact which needs to be recognised in any subsequent analysis of the data.

[1] *Australian academic and research libraries,Supplement, Library statistics ,1985 .*

TABLE 6 : COMPARISON OF THE RATIOS OF PART TIME STUDENTS TO FULL TIME STUDENTS IN THE SURVEY DATA AND AARL 1985 STATISTICS

INSTITUTION	RATIO OF PART TIME TO FULL TIME STUDENTS IN THE SURVEY DATA	RATIO OF PART TIME TO FULL TIME STUDENTS IN AARL 1985 STATISTICS
University of Melbourne	1 : 4.5	1 : 2.45
La Trobe University	1 : 2.1	1 : 6.5
Melbourne C A E	1 : 2.7	1 : 1.55
Swinburne I T	1 : 1.1	1.02: 1
Footscray I T	1 : 2.9	1 : 1.8

One may surmise that full time students, being under less pressure than than part timers, are more likely to make time to complete a questionnaire.

An analysis of the part time: full time student ratio for early returns and late returns adds weight to this notion. The overall ratio of part timers to full timers for the 854 questionnaires received prior to the mailing of the follow up letter was much higher than the ratio for the 177 questionnaires returned after the follow up letters were sent. That is, part timers were much more likely to return questionnaires after the due date than were full timers.

4.23 Courses

4.231 Courses by level

Each respondent was asked to designate the level of the course in which s/he was currently enrolled, according to the following schema: undergraduate degree; undergraduate diploma; postgraduate diploma; masters degree; and doctoral degree; with provision for an 'Other (please specify]' category. Of the 22 'other' responses listed, eleven were second bachelors degrees, or postgraduate degrees such as Bachelor of Letters; two were honours degrees; five were 'Associate diplomas'; one a 'graduate diploma'; one a 'Dip. Ed.'; one an 'undergraduate combined degree'; and one a 'technical certificate'. While most of these responses could have been classified according to the headings provided, one oversight was the omission of a 'postgraduate or second degree' (excluding masters or doctoral degrees)

category. Also, some explanation of how 'Honours' degrees were to be treated should have been given.

Table 7 below outlines frequencies data for courses by level.

TABLE 7 : COURSES BY LEVEL

COURSE LEVEL	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Undergraduate degree	777	76.9
Undergraduate diploma	41	4.1
Postgraduate diploma	96	9.5
Masters degree	48	4.7
Doctoral degree	27	2.7
Other	22	2.2
TOTAL	1,011	100.1

Missing cases = 20

No significant differences were observed in the data for courses by level between the first and second batches of results processed (i.e. the 854 questionnaires sent in before, and the 177 after the mailing of the follow up letter).

Results

Table 8 presents data for level of course by educational institution. A precise comparison of course levels by institution for survey data and AARL 1985 statistics for 'higher degree' and 'other' students proved impossible, due to terminological confusion. Nevertheless, the overall proportions presented here in Table 8 seem to reinforce the traditional research emphasis of the universities c.f. the colleges of advanced education.

For the sake of convenience, the categories 'undergraduate degree' and 'undergraduate diploma' have been merged into 'undergraduate qualification'; and masters and doctoral degrees into 'higher degree'. 'Other' qualifications have been omitted altogether, and treated as missing values, due to difficulty in categorising responses.

TABLE 8 : LEVEL OF COURSE BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	LEVEL OF COURSE			TOTAL	
	Under-graduate qualification %	Post-graduate diploma %	Higher degree %	%	No.
University of Melbourne	84.1	4.3	11.6	100.0	415
La Trobe University	82.1	6.8	11.1	100.0	162
Melbourne C A E	72.0	26.2	1.9	100.1	107
Swinburne I T	85.4	12.2	2.4	100.0	164
Footscray I T	88.0	12.0	-	100.0	117

N = 965
Missing cases = 66

In Table 9 , the crosstabulation of level of course by mode of study has had categories similarly merged, and 'other' responses treated as missing values. This Table demonstrates, quite predictably, that the vast majority of students study for a basic qualification full time, but are more likely to tackle a post-basic qualification part time. According to this data, external students are more common at the postgraduate and higher degree level than at

undergraduate level. However, caution must be exercised in making inferences from this data, due to the small number of external students involved.

TABLE 9 : LEVEL OF COURSE BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	LEVEL OF COURSE			TOTAL	
	Under-graduate qualification %	Post-graduate diploma %	Higher degree %	%	No.
Full time student	91.4	4.4	4.2	100.0	706
Part time student	61.8	22.1	16.2	100.1	272
External student	33.3	55.6	11.1	100.0	9

N = 987
Missing cases = 44

4.232 Courses by year

In Table 10 , frequencies data is given for respondents by year of course. Part time students were asked to indicate the equivalent full time year. Results present a typical distribution for tertiary students. As most degree courses are of three years' duration, the vast majority of students would be expected to be in the first three years of their courses. Within a course, wastage rates are generally much higher between first and second year, than between second and third year. This trend is borne out by the survey data. Of the 882 students in the first three years of their courses, 42.2% were in first year; 30.4% in second year; and 27.4% in third year. Between third and fourth years is a sharp drop in student numbers, with almost three times as many students in third year as in fourth year of their courses. Presumably, many fourth year students are pursuing an honours year. As relatively few courses are of longer than four years' duration, medicine or veterinary science being notable exceptions, few students would be expected to be in the fifth or sixth years of their courses: a trend evident in the survey data, with 33 students indicating they were in the fifth year of their courses, and only seven in sixth year. No student mentioned a course of longer than six years' duration. When results were crosstabulated by educational institution, it was revealed that thirty out of the forty students in fifth and sixth years attended the University of Melbourne; nine were from Swinburne; and one from Melbourne C A E.

Results

TABLE 10 : COURSES BY YEAR

YEAR OF COURSE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
First year	372	36.8
Second year	268	26.5
Third year	242	23.9
Fourth year	90	8.9
Fifth year	33	3.3
Sixth year	7	0.7
TOTAL	1,012	100.1

Missing cases = 19

Crosstabulating courses by year with mode of study revealed a couple of noticeable differences in patterns of study for full time and part time students: there was a significantly higher wastage rate between first and second year for part time students than for full time students; and very few students attempted a course of longer than four years' duration on a part time basis. All external students were in the first three years of their courses.

TABLE 11 : YEAR OF COURSE BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	YEAR OF COURSE						TOTAL	
	First year	Second year	Third year	Fourth year	Fifth year	Sixth year	%	No.
Full time student	34.3	26.5	24.3	9.7	4.4	0.8	100.0	721
Part time student	42.1	26.3	23.7	7.2	0.4	0.4	100.1	278
External student	63.6	27.3	9.1	-	-	-	100.0	11

N = 1010
Missing cases = 21
Chi square = 20.31187, df = 10, significance = 0.0264
Cramer's V = 0.10028

4.233 Courses by subject specialisation

As a 'rough and ready' indicator of field of study, each respondent was asked to indicate which of nine topics listed best described his / her course. Options included pure or applied sciences; medical sciences, including veterinary science and paramedical fields; engineering; computing; social sciences or humanities; creative arts; education; business, commerce or economics; and management. An 'other' option was provided for those whose areas did not fit the suggested categories. The classification avoids over-specification of topics, which can make results impossible to analyse. As only a general indicator of subject specialisation was required, topic areas were deliberately left broad. Where more than one category was ticked, coders were asked to use their judgement as to the primary subject element, and to be influenced by the name of the course the respondent had listed in Question 4 (a). Whenever education was ticked as well as the subject field of the teaching method, coders were instructed to code as 'education'.

In all, seventy 'other' options were listed by respondents. At least half of these could have been covered by the options specified. It appears that some respondents were unclear about what was subsumed under some of the more generic headings, e.g. pure or applied sciences; social sciences or humanities; or creative arts. Twelve 'other' options mentioned should have been listed as pure or applied sciences; these included mathematics / statistics; biological science; geology; forestry; and agricultural science. Eleven were encompassed under social sciences or humanities; including behavioural sciences; psychology and history. Technically, law could be classified as a social science. However, in retrospect, it would have

been preferable to have listed 'law ' as a separate category - seventeen respondents listed it in the 'other' category. 'Accountancy ' could have been included with economics; and topics like graphics; design; film production; media studies; and music with creative arts. 'Other' options given by respondents which were not adequately covered by the listed categories included recreational studies and physical education, mentioned by six; languages, by four; librarianship and building (each mentioned twice); and philosophy and religious studies (each cited once).

Table 12 presents frequencies data for courses by subject specialisation. On the basis of the distribution, it would appear that students studying in the 'softer' disciplines (social sciences or humanities; arts; education; etc.) are proportionately overrepresented amongst respondents, in comparison with the 'hard' sciences and technological areas. Unfortunately, due to the complexity of the data, and the difficulty in deriving comparative figures for the student population at large, this is an observation which cannot be substantiated through a formal statistical test.

TABLE 12 : COURSES BY SUBJECT SPECIALISATION

SUBJECT FIELD	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Pure or applied sciences	118	11.6
Medicat sciences	78	7.7
Engineering	105	10.3
Computing	34	3.3
Social sciences or humanities	288	28.3
Creative art	39	3.8
Education	100	9.8
Business, commerce, economics	169	16.6
Management	16	1.6
Other	70	6.9
TOTAL	1,017	99.9

Missing cases = 14

In comparing subject specialisation dala for questionnaires returned before, and after, the mailing of the follow up letter, some interesting trends emerged. Proportionately more social sciences, humanities, creative arts, and medical sciences students returned questionnaires early; and many more pure sciences, applied sciences, engineering, computing and management students returned questionnaires late. Percentages for education and business students remained fairly constant. So it seems that not only are students from the 'soft' sciences more likely to return questionnaires than are students from the 'hard' sciences; they are also more likely to return them promptly. Again, this is an observation which needs corrob. ration in further research.

4.24 Age distribution

Table 13 Presents frequency data on the age distribution of respondents. As expected, the vast majority of respondents (78.8%) were less than thirty years of age; and 68.2% were less than 25 years. No student was aged seventy or over. Only thirteen respondents (1.1%) were over fifty years of age.

TABLE 13 : AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

AGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
15 - 19 years	264	25.9
20 - 24 years	432	42.3
25 - 29 years	108	10.6
30 - 39 years	142	13.9
40 - 49 years	62	6.1
50 - 59 years	9	0.9
60 - 69 years	4	0.4
TOTAL	1,021	100.1

Missing cases = 10

Results

The crosstabulation of age group by educational institution revealed some quite ditterent age distributions between the five institutions. The University of Melbourne and Footscray I T had much younger student bodies than did the other three institutions, with 85.3% and 84.7%, respectively, of students aged under thirty years. In contrast, only 70.7% of students from Swinburne I T; 72.5% from La Trobe University; and 74.1% from Melbourne C A E were aged under thirty years.

TABLE 14 : AGE DISTRIBUTION BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	AGE GROUP							TOTAL	
	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-29 years	30-39 years	40-49 years	50-59 years	60-69 years	%	No.
University of Melbourne	31.9	44.2	9.2	8.7	5.0	0.5	0.5	100.0	423
La Trobe University	21.0	43.7	7.8	16.8	8.4	2.4	-	100.1	167
Melbourne C A E	26.9	37.0	10.2	16.7	9.3	-	-	100.1	108
Swinburne I T	16.8	40.1	13.8	21.6	6.6	0.6	0.6	100.1	167
Footscray I T	26.6	45.2	12.9	13.7	1.6	-	-	100.0	124

N = 989
Missing cases = 42
Chi square = 70.70583, df = 30, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.11886

As anticipated, mode of study showed a strong correlation with age. Full time students were much younger than part time or external students. 92.8% of full timers were under thirty years of age; compared with only 45.6% of part timers; and 36.4% of external students. This trend is even more accentuated when percentages are taken for the under 25s: 87.0% of all full timers were under 25; in comparison with only 23.5% of part timers; and 9.1% of external students.

TABLE 15 : AGE DISTRIBUTION BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	AGE GROUP							TOTAL	
	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-29 years	30-39 years	40-49 years	50-59 years	60-69 years	%	No.
Full time student	35.6	51.4	5.8	5.4	1.8	-	-	100.0	720
Part time student	2.1	21.4	22.1	34.2	16.4	2.8	1.1	100.1	281
External student	-	9.1	27.3	36.4	18.2	9.1	-	100.1	11

N = 1012
Missing cases = 19
Chi square = 423.35933, df = 12, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.45735

4.3 TYPES OF LIBRARIES USED, AND FREQUENCY OF THAT USAGE

Question 7 was designed to provide an overview of respondents' library usage habits, and to place in context their public library usage. For each of six types of libraries, students were asked to indicate frequency of usage on a seven point scale which ranged from 'I never use it' to 'I use it more than once a week'. The libraries listed included the student's own university or college library; another university or college library; the State Library of Victoria; the local public library; a library at work; a library at a club, social group or church; and the Council of Adult Education Library. Again an 'other' option was provided.

4.31 The student's own university or college library

As expected, respondents were high users of their own university or college libraries. Only 2.4% claimed they never used their own academic library, or used it less often than annually; a further 9.8% were relatively infrequent users, using it only a few times a year. 87.8% of

respondents used their university or college library at least once or twice a month, with 72.4% using it at least once a week.

Such results are pleasing and reintorce the centrality ol library services in the student's life: although, of course, it can be argued that library users are more likely than are non-users to reply to a survey ol this nature.

Table 16 depicts frequency ol usage ol students' own academic libraries.

TABLE 16 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF STUDENTS' OWN UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARIES

FREQUENCY OF USAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
'I use it more often than once a week'	481	47.2
'I use it about once a week'	257	25.2
'I use it once or twice a month'	157	15.4
'I use it every two or three months'	74	7.3
'I use it once or twice a year'	25	2.5
'I rarely use it' (less often than once a year)	11	1.1
'I never use it'	13	1.3
TOTAL	1,018	100.0

Missing cases = 13

Crosstabulating frequency ol usage ol the student's own academic library by educational institution revealed fairly similar patterns for each of the five institutions, and a reasonably low correlation of the two variables (Cramer's V = 0.11886).

A much stronger correlation and more distinctive pattern was evident in the crosstabulation of frequency of usage of the student's own academic library by mode of study. Full time students were much more frequent users of their academic libraries than were part timers.

supporting the findings of most earlier studies. Wainwright and Dean[2] considered this trend was due to inadequate library opening hours in tertiary institutions; and to the greater likelihood of part time students having access to alternative sources of study materials than do full time students. Another factor could be limited time available for personal study for those working full time, and perhaps a greater tendency amongst part timers to aim at a basic 'pass' mark, rather than putting in the additional effort required to achieve a higher grade. Survey data here showed that 81.6% of full timers used their own university or college libraries at least once a week, compared with 52.2% of part timers. Only 7.7% of full timers used their academic library less often than monthly, while 20.1% of part timers did so. None of the external students used their university or college library more than once or twice a month, with 90.9% using it less than monthly. The crosstabulation by mode of study is given in the following table.

TABLE 17 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF RESPONDENTS' OWN UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARIES BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY USAGE							TOTAL	
	'I never use it'	'I rarely use it' (less than once a year)	'I use it once or twice a year'	'I use it every 2 or 3 months'	'I use it once or twice a month'	'I use it about once a week'	'I use it more than once a week'	%	No.
Full time students	1.0	0.7	1.3	4.7	10.7	22.7	58.9	100.0	718
Part time students	1.8	1.8	5.4	11.1	27.9	32.9	19.3	100.2	280
External students	9.1	9.1	9.1	63.6	9.1	-	-	100.0	11

N = 1009
Missing cases = 22
Chi square = 213.48701, df = 12, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.32526

2 E.J. Wainwright & J.E. Dean. *Measures of adequacy for library collections in Australian colleges of advanced education: report of a research project*, WAIT, Perth, Oct. 1976 , vol. 2, p. 57.

Results

When results were analysed by level of course, undergraduates were significantly more likely to be frequent users of their own academic libraries than were postgraduates. 77.7% of undergraduates used their own university or college libraries weekly or more often than weekly, compared with 51.5% of the postgraduates (i.e. postgraduate diploma, masters and doctoral students combined). However, the rate for doctoral students was significantly higher than for masters or postgraduate diploma students - 77.7% compared with 47.9% of masters students; and 45.7% of postgraduate diploma students. The rate for undergraduate degree students was 77.4%, and for undergraduate diploma students 80.5%.

TABLE 18 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE STUDENT'S OWN UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY LEVEL OF COURSE

LEVEL OF COURSE	FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY USAGE							TOTAL	
	'I never use it'	'I rarely use it' (less than once a year)	'I use it once or twice a year'	'I use it every 2 or 3 months'	'I use it once or twice a month'	'I use it about once a week'	"I use i more than once a week'	%	No.
Undergraduate degree	0.8	1.3	1.6	5.2	13.7	26.0	51.4	100.0	768
Undergraduate diploma	4.9	-	-	7.3	7.3	14.6	65.9	100.0	41
Postgraduate diploma	3.2	-	7.4	17.0	26.6	20.2	25.5	99.9	94
Masters	2.1	-	8.3	16.7	25.0	27.1	20.8	100.0	48
Doctorate	-	3.7	-	3.7	14.8	37.0	40.7	99.9	27
Other	-	-	4.5	13.6	18.2	27.3	36.4	100.0	22

N = 1000
Missing cases = 31
Chi square = 101.57110, df = 30, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.14253

With 'year of course', there was a slight increase in frequency of usage of the student's own university or college library each year from first year till fourth year, but a decline in fifth and sixth years. 71.4% of first years used their own tertiary library at least once a week, compared with 72.2% of second years; 74.4% of third years; and 76.6% of fourth years; 68.6% of fifth years; and 57.2% of sixth years.

With increasing age, there was a small but definite decrease in the amount and frequency of usage of the student's own university or college library . Interestingly, this trend was coupled with a small increase in usage of other academic libraries with increasing age. (For details see Section 4.32). Table 19 portrays the data from the crosstabulation of usage of the student's own university or college library by age. Figures for those in the age groups of fifty years of age and over are suspect, due to the small numbers involved. In the 15 - 19 years age group, 1.6% of respondents claimed to use their own university or college library 'never' or 'rarely '; this figure increased to 2.1% in the 20 - 24 years age bracket; 2.8% amongst those aged 25 - 29 years; 3.5% amongst those 30 - 39 years; and decreased slightly to 3.2% in those aged 40 - 49 years. Amongst the 15 -19 year olds, 93.2% claimed they used their own academic library at least once or twice a month; compared with 90.0% of those aged 20 - 24; 82.4% of those 25 - 29; 80.1% of those 30 -39; and 80.4% of those 40 - 49.

TABLE 19 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE STUDENT'S OWN UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARIES BY AGE GROUP

AGE GROUP	FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY USAGE							TOTAL	
	'I never use it'	'I rarely use it' (less than once a year)	'I use it once or twice a year'	'I use it every 2 or 3 months'	'I use it once or twice a month'	I use it about once a week'	'I use it more than once a week'	%	No.
15 - 19 years	0.8	0.8	-	5.3	17.4	28.4	53.4	100.1	264
20 - 24 years	1.2	0.9	2.6	5.3	13.2	21.3	55.5	100.0	431
25 - 29 years	1.9	0.9	6.5	8.3	18.5	33.3	30.6	100.0	108
30 - 39 years	2.1	1.4	1.4	14.9	24.1	25.5	30.5	99.9	141
40 - 49 years	1.6	1 6	6.6	9.8	23.0	21.3	36.1	100.0	61
50 - 59 years	-	11.1	11.1	11.1	11.1	33.3	22.2	99.9	9
60 - 69 years	-	-	-	-	25.0	50.0	25.0	100.0	4

N = 1018
Missing cases = 13
Chi square = 96.97622, df = 36, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.12600

4.32 Other university or college libraries

While slightly more than half of respondents never or rarely used any other academic libraries than their own university or college library, a substantial minority did make regular use of such libraries. 16.8% used other academic libraries at least once a month, and 43.6% at least once or twice a year. These frequencies are portrayed in more detail in Table 20. Due to the relatively high number of missing cases here (95), relative frequencies rather than adjusted frequencies have been used, with missing cases added to the 'I never use it' category, on the [reasonable] assumption that missing cases are non-users.

TABLE 20 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF OTHER UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARIES

FREQUENCY OF USAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
'I never use it'	468	45.4
'I rarely use it' (less often than once a year)	114	11.1
'I use it once or twice a year'	176	17.1
'I use it every two or three months'	100	9.7
'I use it once or twice a month'	110	10.7
'I use it about once a week'	42	4.1
'I use it more often than once a week'	21	2.0
TOTAL	1,031	100.1

Comparing late returns of questionnaires with early returns, it was found that slightly more of those who returned their questionnaires after the follow up letter were non-users or 'rare' users of other academic libraries than were those who returned their questionnaires promptly (57.6% for the late returns c.f. 50.9% for early returns).

When frequency of usage of other university or college libraries was crosstabulated by educational institution (see **Table 21**), it was found that Melbourne C A E students were much more likely than students from the other four institutions to use another academic

library, and to use it more frequently.[3] Only 25.7% of Melbourne C A E students claimed to use another university or college library 'never' or 'rarely', compared with an average of 58.4% for the other four institutions. 52.5% of Melbourne C A E students used another academic library at least once in two or three months, in comparison with an average of 25.7% for the other four institutions. Perhaps this trend is predictable, considering the location of Melbourne C A E is adjacent to the University of Melbourne. However, it is interesting to note that Melbourne C A E students were also the highest and most frequent users of the other types of libraries listed. This may have something to do with the nature of courses at Melbourne C A E, which are predominantly teacher education.

TABLE 21 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF OTHER UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARIES BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY USAGE							TOTAL	
	'I rarely 'I never use it'	'I use it use it' (less than once a year)	'I use it once or twice a year'	'I use it every 2 or 3 months'	'I use it once or twice a month'	'I use it about once a week'	more than once a week'	%	No.
University of Melbourne	45.9	12.5	17.3	7.9	10.2	4.6	1.5	99.9	392
La Trobe University	34.2	13.8	22.4	10.5	12.5	3.3	3.3	100.0	152
Melbourne CAE	18.8	6.9	21.8	21.8	20.8	6.9	3.0	100.0	101
Swinburne I T	43.3	12.7	17.3	11.3	10.7	4.0	0.7	100.0	150
Footscray I T	42.9	13.4	19.6	10.7	8.9	1.8	2.7	100.0	112

N = 907
Missing cases = 124
Chi square = 69.82238, df = 30, significance = 0.0001
Cramer's V = 0.12327

Patterns of usage of other academic libraries were fairly similar for full time and part time students. However, with level of course, postgraduate students were slightly more likely to use another tertiary library than were undergraduates, with 56.6% of postgraduates using another academic library at least a couple of times a year, compared with 46.3% of undergraduates. 11.2% of postgraduates used such libraries more often than weekly, while only 6.1% of undergraduates did so. (Chi square = 54.69593, df = 30, significance = 0.0038, Cramer's V = 0.10892).

[3] Note that in the ensuing crosstabulations, percentages given are based on adjusted frequencies, with missing cases excluded from crosstabulations.

With increasing age, there was a slight increase in the amount and frequency of usage of other university and college libraries. As noted in Section 4.32, this was associated with a small decrease in usage of the student's own academic library with increasing age. Table 22 gives the crosstabulation of frequency of usage of other university or college libraries by age group. It should be realised that percentages given for those in the 50 -59 years and 60 - 69 years age brackets are misleading because of the few cases involved. In those under 20 years of age, 63% 'never' or 'rarely' used another academic library; for those in their twenties, this decreased to 48.5%; to 47.1% in their thirties; and a marginal increase to 47.8% for respondents in their forties. Amongst the under-20s, 13.8% used another academic library at least once or twice a month; compared with 18.3% for those in their twenties; 22.3% for those in their thirties; and 28.2% for those in their forties.

TABLE 22 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF OTHER UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARIES BY AGE GROUP

AGE GROUP	FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY USAGE							TOTAL	
	'I never use it'	'I rarely use it' (less than once a year)	'I use it once or twice a year'	'I use it every 2 or 3 months'	'I use it once or twice a month'	'I use it about once a week'	'I use it more than once a week'	%	No.
15 - 19 years	53.7	9.3	17.5	5.7	9.3	3.3	1.2	100.0	246
20 - 24 years	34.9	12.9	21.7	11.7	13.9	3.4	1.5	100.0	410
25 - 29 years	35.9	15.5	21.4	10.7	6.8	5.8	3.9	100.0	103
30 - 39 years	36.4	10.7	13.2	17.4	14.9	4.1	3.3	100.0	121
40 - 49 years	32.6	15.2	10.9	13.0	6.5	15.2	6.5	99.9	46
50 - 59 years	14.3	14.3	-	-	28.6	28.6	14.3	100.1	7
60 - 69 years	33.3	33.3	33.3	-	-	-	-	99.9	3

N = 936
Missing cases = 95
Chi square = 86.27434, df = 36, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.12394

4.33 State Library of Victoria

Exactly three quarters of respondents were non-users of the State Library of Victoria. Of the one quarter of respondents who did use the State Library of Victoria, most were relatively infrequent users - using it either 'once in two or three months' or 'once or twice a year' - which constituted 18.7% of all respondents. A small, dedicated band (6.3%) used the State Library of Victoria more frequently, at least once or twice a month.

In Table 23, the frequencies data given is based on relative frequencies, with the 109 missing cases added to the non-user category.

TABLE 23 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA

FREQUENCY OF USAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
'I never use it'	619	60.1
'I rarely use it' (less often than once a year)	155	15.0
'I use it once or twice a year'	128	12.4
'I use it every two or three months'	65	6.3
'I use it once or twice a month'	45	4.4
'I use it about once a week'	15	1.5
'I use it more often than once a week'	4	0.4
TOTAL	1,031	100.1

N = 1031

A comparison of early and late returns found, again, that later respondents were more likely to be non-users or rare users of the State Library of Victoria than were early respondents. (81.3% for late respondents c.f. 73.6% for early respondents).

Results

Crosstabulating frequency of usage of the State Library of Victoria by educational institution produced some noticeable variations between institutions, much of which can be explained in terms of physical proximity of the institution to the State Library of Victoria.[4] Melbourne C A E students were the highest and most frequent users of the State Library of Victoria, with 39.8% claiming to use it at least once or twice a year, and 60.2% to use it 'never' or 'rarely'. Students from Footscray I T were the next most frequent users (33.6% / 66.3%); followed by those from the University of Melbourne (28.6% / 71.5%); La Trobe University (20.7% / 79.2%); and Swinburne I T (20.3% / 79.7%).

TABLE 24 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY USAGE							TOTAL	
	'I rarely 'I never use it'	'I use it use it' (less than once a year)	'I use it once or twice a year'	'I use it every 2 or 3 months'	'I use it once or twice a month'	'I use it about once a week'	more than once a week'	%	No.
University of Melbourne	51.2	20.3	11.6	8.7	5.7	2.3	0.3	100.1	389
La Trobe University	67.8	11.4	10.7	4.0	4.0	1.3	0.7	99.9	149
Melbourne C A E	44.9	15.3	16.3	10.2	10.2	3.1	-	100.0	98
Swinburne I T	61.5	18.2	15.4	2.1	2.8	-	-	100.0	143
Footscray I T	57.5	8.8	21.2	8.8	1.8	0.9	0.9	99.9	113

N = 892
Missing cases = 139
Chi square = 72.73221, df = 30, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.12685

The crosstabulation of frequency of usage of the State Library of Victoria by mode of study showed very similar usage patterns for full time and part time students. The same applied with crosstabulations by age group and level of course, with no distinctive patterns discernible for different categories.

The fact that a significant number of tertiary students do use the State Library of Victoria regularly reinforces the findings of Broadbent's1983 user and stock failure survey of the State Library of Victoria.[5] Of 2,160 visits to the State Library, Broadbent found that 980 (45.5%) were by students in connexion with formal coursework or research. Approximately two thirds (67.8%) of these students were from tertiary institutions; the rest from school. Of all respondents, 30 5% had used the State Library within the past week; 33.6% within the past twelve months; and 35.9% were first time visitors, or had not visited the Library 'for ages'. These results are fairly consistent with those of the current research, which has shown that a little more than a quarter of those who do use the State Library are very frequent users.

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[4] Note that in the ensuing crosstabulations, percentages given are based on adjusted frequencies, with missing cases excluded from crosstabulations.

[5] MarianneBroadbent, 'Who wins? Who loses? : user success and failure in the State Library of Victoria', *Australian academic & research libraries* , vol. 15, no. 2, June 1984, pp. 65 - 80.

4.34 Local public library

In response to Question 12 'Are you a member of your local public library?', 61.8% of respondents answered 'Yes'. For reasons explained in Section 4.51, this figure for library registrations may be slightly understated. The latest available Library Council of Victoria statistics for public libraries indicate that 43.8% of the State's population are registered public library users[6]. Hence the survey respondents are at least 18% above the State average in terms of library registrations.

However, registration statistics in themselves reveal little of library usage habits. One may use a public library without being a registered borrower; or, conversely, one may be a registered borrower and not use the library. The frequencies data for Question 7 (d) on frequency of usage of public libraries, is more revealing here. 65.7% of respondents claimed they used public libraries at some time; 34.3% appeared to be total non-users of public libraries (this figure was derived by adding the 73 missing cases, or 7.1% of respondents, to the 280 , 27.2% of respondents, who claimed never to use the local public library). 11.3% of all respondents rarely used the local public library, where 'rarely' was defined as using it, on average, less often than annually. 54.5% of respondents said they used their public libraries at least once or twice a year: this figure comprises 32.9% of respondents who used their public libraries fairly infrequently - either 'once or twice a year' or 'once in two or three months'; and the 21.6% of committed users who used them frequently - at least once or twice a month. This data is set out in **Table 25**. Note that relative frequencies have been used in this table rather than adjusted frequencies.

TABLE 25 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

FREQUENCY OF USAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
'I never use it'	353	34.3
'I rarely use it' (less often than once a year)	117	11.3
'I use it once or twice a year'	171	16.6
'I use it every two or three months'	168	16.3
'I use it once or twice a month'	164	15.9
'I use it about once a week'	44	4.3
'I use it more often than once a week'	14	1.4
TOTAL	1,031	100.1

N = 1031

[6] *Annual statistical bulletin of public libraries in Victoria , no. 10, 1982-83* , Library Council of Victoria, Melbourne, 1986, pp. 10,11.

Results

Consistent with previous observations, late returns yielded slightly higher figures for non-usage of public libraries than did early returns - 38.4% for the late returns and 33.4% for early returns.

Crosstabulating [7] frequency of usage of public libraries by educational institution revealed that college students were generally greater and more frequent users of public libraries than were university students; and that students from Melbourne C A E and Footscray I T used public libraries more than students from the other three institutions. Only 29.1% of Melbourne C A E respondents said they 'never' or 'rarely' used public libraries; compared with 35.3% of those from Footscray I T; 40.0% from Swinburne I T; 42.0% from La Trobe University; and 47.1% from the University of Melbourne. Public libraries were used at least once or twice a month by 42.7% of Melbourne C A E respondents; 28.4% from Footscray I T; 25.1% from La Trobe University; 18.9% from the University of Melbourne; and 16.7% from Swinburne I T.

TABLE 26 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY USAGE							TOTAL	
	'I rarely 'I never use it'	'I use it use it' (less than once a year)	'I use it once or twice a year'	'I use it every 2 or 3 months'	'I use it once or twice a month'	'I use it about once a week'	more than once a week'	%	No.
University of Melbourne	32.3	14.8	18.5	15.5	13.8	4.3	0.8	100.0	399
La Trobe University	31.0	11.0	17.4	15.5	16.1	7.7	1.3	100.0	155
Melbourne C A E	19.4	9.7	14.6	13.6	34.0	5.8	2.9	100.0	103
Swinburne I T	27.1	12.9	18.7	24.5	13.5	2.6	0.6	99.9	155
Footscray I T	28.4	6.9	17.2	19.0	20.7	4.3	3.4	99.9	116

N = 928
Missing cases = 103
Chi square = 57.14602, df = 30, significance = 0.0020
Cramer's V = 0.11033

Virtually identical public library usage patterns were established for full time and part time students in the crosstabulation by mode of study.

The crosstabulation of frequency of usage of the local public library by year of course revealed a noticeable decrease in public library usage with each additional year of course. That is, first years showed the greatest and most frequent usage of public libraries; there was a small

[7] Note that in the ensuing crosstabulations, percentages given are based on adjusted frequencies, with missing cases excluded from crosstabulations.

decrement in usage in second year; a further decrement in third year; and so on. Respondents in the first year of their courses 'never' or 'rarely' used the public library in 34.0% of cases; in second year, 40.0%; in third year, 48.2%; in fourth year, 65.5%; in fifth year, 75.8%; and in sixth year, 85.7%. (Note that sixth year figures are atypical due to the small numbers involved - only seven cases). 49.2% of respondents in the first year of their courses used the public library at least once in two or three months; compared with 41.9% in second year; 31.6% in third year; 18.5% in fourth year; 3.4% in fifth year; and 0.0% in sixth year. These results would seem to suggest that local public library collections are of less value for study materials as courses become more specialised and more advanced; and are of greatest use for general materials at an elementary level. It would also appear that, as course demands increase with each additional year of course, students to have less time for public library usage for recreational and general interest purposes. **Table 27** documents this trend.

TABLE 27 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES BY YEAR OF COURSE

LEVEL OF COURSE	FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY USAGE							TOTAL	
	'I never use it'	'I rarely use it' (less than once a year)	'I use it once or twice a year'	'I use it every 2 or 3 months'	'I use it once or twice a month'	'I use it about once a week'	'I use it more than once a week'	%	No.
First year	24.1	9.9	16.8	18.8	21.4	6.1	2.9	100.0	345
Second year	30.2	9.8	18.0	18.4	18.8	4.3	0.4	99.9	255
Third year	32.9	15.3	20.3	16.2	10.4	3.6	1.4	100.1	222
Fourth year	45.7	19.8	16.0	7.4	7.4	3.7	-	100.0	81
Fifth year	51.7	24.1	20.7	3.4	-	-	-	99.9	29
Sixth year	28.6	57.1	14.3	-	-	-	-	100.0	7

N = 939
Missing cases = 92
Chi square = 60.93193, df = 30, significance = 0.0007
Cramer's V = 0.11374

In the crosstabulation of frequency of usage of the public library by level of course, there was a slight tendency for undergraduates to be more frequent public library users than postgraduates: 28.0% of undergraduates never used the public library, compared with 34.6% of postgraduates; 6.4% of undergraduates used the public library at least weekly, c.f. 5.1% of postgraduates. However, as results failed to reach the required .05 level of statistical significance (Significance = 0.1133), the possibility that they represent chance variations rather than actual differences cannot be ruled out.

Results

No particular patterns were discernible in the crosstabulations of frequency of usage of the public library by age group, which suggests that age is not an important factor in student usage of public libraries.

4.35 Library at work place

Given that 71.2% of survey participants were full time students, this option was relevant to only a minority. 79.0% of respondents ticked the 'I never use it category ', or omitted the option altogether. But with the 21.0% who did use a library at work, most usage was relatively frequent. 11.7% used their work library at least once a week; 15.2% at least once a month; and 18.4% at least once in two or three months. Only 2.6% used it 'rarely ' or 'once or twice a year'. Table 28, as with preceding frequency tables in this Section, portrays relative frequencies, with missing cases added to the non-users category.

TABLE 28 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF LIBRARIES AT WORK PLACE

FREQUENCY OF USAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
'I never use it'	815	79.0
'I rarely use it' (less often than once a year)	8	0.8
'I use it once or twice a year'	19	1.8
'I use it every two or three months'	33	3.2
'I use it once or twice a month'	36	3.5
'I use it about once a week'	43	4.2
'I use it more often than once a week'	77	7.5
TOTAL	1,031	100.0

N = 1031

Crosstabulating frequency of usage of library at work place by educational institution showed a few marked variations between the five institutions. Again, Melbourne C A E students were more likely to use a library at work than were students from the other institutions, but differences were less pronounced than with other types of libraries. 70.0% of students from Melbourne C A E used a library at work 'never' or 'rarely ', compared with 73.6% from Swinburne I T; 76.8% from the University of Melbourne; 77.9% from Footscray I T; and 82.7% from La Trobe University.

Predictably, crosstabulating [8] frequency of usage of library at work place by mode of study produced a very strong correlation, with part time students accounting for most of the work library usage. 88.7% of full time students used a library at work 'never' or 'rarely', compared with 45.8% of the part timers. Only 8.9% of the full timers used a library at work at least once or twice a month, but 39.3% of the part timers did so.

TABLE 29 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF LIBRARIES AT WORK PLACE BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY USAGE							TOTAL	
	'I never use it'	'I rarely use it' (less than once a year)	'I use it once or twice a year'	'I use it every 2 or 3 months'	'I use it once or twice a month'	'I use it about once a week'	'I use it more than once a week'	%	No.
Full time student	88.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	2.3	2.1	4.6	100.0	607
Part time student	44.6	1.2	5.4	9.5	8.7	11.6	19.0	100.0	242
External student	22.2	11.1	-	11.1	11.1	11.1	33.3	99.9	9

N = 858
Missing cases = 173
Chi square = 200.93709, df = 12, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.34219

Similarly, when results were analysed by level of course, postgraduate students were much more likely to use a library at work, and to use it more frequently, than were undergraduates. While 84.5% of undergraduates never used a library at work; only 39.0% of postgraduate students did not use such a library. 48.1% of postgraduates used a work library at least once or twice a month, compared with 10.6% of undergraduates. Given such a large discrepancy between the scores, results were highly significant, statistically speaking, with a strong correlation (Chi square = 220.59939, df = 30, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.22729) - as was expected.

Another strong relationship was evident in the crosstabulation by age group, with increasing use being made of a library at work as respondents became older. Undoubtedly, this relationship is explained by the fact that, with increasing age, respondents were more likely to be in the work force, and to be studying part time rather than full time. Table 30 portrays this

[8] Note that in the ensuing crosstabulations, percentages given are based on adjusted frequencies, with missing cases excluded from crosstabulations.

data. Note that the most striking variation is between the 20 -24 years and 25 - 29 years age brackets. Figures for the over-50s are misleading due to the few cases involved. Amongst the 15 -19 year olds, 92.6% said they 'never ' or 'rarely ' used a library at work; compared with 85.8% of those aged 20 -24; 53.8% of those 25 - 29; 43.4% of those 30 - 39; and 46.9% of those 40 - 49. While only 5.6% of those 15 - 19 years, and 11.0% of those 20 - 24 years used a library at work at least once or twice a month; 32.3% of those 25 -29 years; 42.5% of those in their thirties; and 40.5% of those in their forties, did so.

TABLE 30 : FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF LIBRARIES AT WORK PLACE BY AGE GROUP

AGE GROUP	FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY USAGE							TOTAL	
	'I never use it'	'I rarely use it' (less than once a year)	'I use it once or twice a year'	'I use it every 2 or 3 months'	'I use it once or twice a month'	'I use it about once a week'	'I use it more than once a week'	%	No.
15 - 19 years	92.6	-	0.4	1.3	1.3	0.4	3.9	99.9	231
20 - 24 years	85.0	0.8	1.4	1.9	3.0	2.5	5.5	100.1	366
25 - 29 years	52.7	1.1	4.3	9.7	6.5	7.5	18.3	100.1	93
30 - 39 years	41.7	1.7	5.8	8.3	11.7	15.8	15.0	100.0	120
40 - 49 years	42.6	4.3	4.3	8.5	4.3	14.9	21.3	100.2	47
50 - 59 years	66.7	-	-	-	-	-	33.3	100.0	6
60 - 69 years	66.7	-	-	-	-	-	33.3	100.0	3

N = 866
Missing cases = 165
Chi square = 210.52393, df = 36, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.20129

4.36 Library at a club, social group, church, etc.

Very few respondents used such libraries. Adding together the 809 who said 'I never use it' and the 168 missing cases, gave 977, or 94.8%, for whom the option was not relevant. With the 54, or 5.3%, who reported such usage, 1.9% used such a library 'rarely '; 0.8% used it once or twice a year; 1.5% every two or three months; 0.8% once or twice a month; and 0.3% once a week. With such small numbers involved, any further analysis of data was meaningless.

4.37 Council of Adult Education Library

Even fewer respondents reported using the Council of Adult Education Library. Of 1,031 cases, 997, or 96.7%, either ticked the 'I never use it' category (844) or omitted the option altogether (153). With the 34 (3.4%) who reported using the Council of Adult Education Library, 16 (1.6%) claimed they did so rarely; nine (0.9%) used it once or twice a year; four (0.4%) every two or three months; three (0.3%) once or twice a month; and two (0.2%) more often than weekly.

The crosstabulation of frequency of usage of the Council of Adult Education Library by educational institution revealed negligible use by students from the University of Melbourne, La Trobe University, Swinburne I T or Footscray I T, with an average of 97.0% in the 'I never use it' category . Melbourne C A E fared slightly better, with 89.9% who never used it. However, numbers involved are too small to be meaningful.

4.38 Other libraries

98 respondents claimed they used other types of libraries. Approximately one quarter of these used the libraries they nominated infrequently (i.e. 'rarely ' or 'once or twice a year'); 35.0% used the library either once or twice a month or once in two or three months; and 40.0% used it weekly or more than weekly.

Five of the 98 respondents failed to specify what the 'other' type of library was. A few students named more than one library. Most of the libraries specified were special libraries. The most frequently nominated were university branch (departmental or faculty) libraries, with fourteen citations. Obviously, these respondents saw such libraries as quite distinct from their 'own university or college library '. The Rowden White Library, a recreational library for students, located in the Union Building at the University of Melbourne, was named by five students. Eight students mentioned libraries of university residential colleges. After university branch libraries, the next most popular of the 'other' libraries, with nine mentions, were medical libraries, primarily hospital libraries, but also libraries of organisations such as the College of General Practitioners: which is to be expected, given the liberal sprinkling of medical students in the sample. Libraries of professional associations or unions, e.g. the Institute of Chartered Accountants Library, rated seven mentions. CSIRO libraries or libraries of scientific laboratories were named by seven respondents. Law libraries, e.g. the Supreme Court Library or libraries of legal firms were cited by six. Six named specific Federal or State Government departmental libraries, or their branches, e.g. libraries of regional offices of the Ministry of Education. A range of other special libraries rated one or two mentions: these included the National Gallery Library; the Australian Film Institute Library and the Library of the State Film Centre; the Social Biology Resource Centre; the Institute of Family Studies Library; the Library of the Craft Council of Victoria; and the Library of the U.S. Consulate.

About half a dozen 'other' libraries should have been included under the heading 'Library of a club, social group or church'. These included libraries of ethnic groups such as the Maltese Community Council Library; 'music library of a recorder guild'; and a few collections of churches or religious organisations.

Several interstate libraries were mentioned, although it was unclear whether respondents visited them personally, or drew on their resources through the interlibrary loans network. The National Library of Australia was cited twice; and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Library and the State Library of N.S.W., once each. A couple of respondents said they used interstate libraries for photocopied articles.

Four students mentioned use of their local secondary school library. Two nominated public libraries other than their 'local' public library.

A number of students (12) made specific reference to their heavy reliance on their own personal libraries, purchasing required sources from new or secondhand bookshops. Some obviously made a considerable personal investment in books, with one claiming to spend in excess of $1,000 p.a. Reasons volunteered for prefering a personal collection to library resources included heavy work schedules and lack of time to visit academic or public libraries; and libraries which were relatively inaccessible due either to an inconvenient geographic location or limited opening hours. Several appeared to have organised successful book sharing arrangements with their friends. As one student commented: *'I have an extensive personal library and so do many of my friends. We are happy to share our resources.'*

4.39 Relationship between courses by subject specialisation and amount and frequency of library usage

To explore possible relationships between areas of subject specialisation in courses, and amount and frequency of use of different types of libraries, crosstabulations were performed on each of the variables. As the tables are lengthy and complex, they have not been given here - rather a summary of the data is given in the form of rankings of the nine subject categories, proceeding from the subjects which account for the greatest and most frequent library usage, to those which account for the least. Each of these crosstabulations, with the exception of the one for the Council of Adult Education Library, produced results which were statistically significant at the .05 level.

As complex interrelationships between usage of different types of libraries were discovered in analysing the crosstabulations, it seemed appropriate to present the results together in one section, rather than scattering them throughout previous sections.

4.391 The student's own university or college library

Table 31 on the next two pages presents three sets of rankings for the subject specialisations accounting for the greatest and most frequent usage of students' own academic libraries. The three sets present different ways of aggregating the data. While there are, naturally, some differences between the sets of rankings, generally they are complementary.

TABLE 31 : RANKINGS OF SUBJECT AREAS ACCOUNTING FOR THE GREATEST AND MOST FREQUENT USAGE OF STUDENTS' OWN UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARIES

(a) Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students using their own university or college library at least once a week

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Social sciences or humanities	81.6
(2)	Engineering	78.1
(3)	Creative arts	77.0
(4)	Pure or applied sciences	73.7
(5)	Business, commerce or economics	73.4
(6)	Management	62.6
(7)	Medical sciences	58.5
(8)	Computing	55.9
(9)	Education	55.6

TABLE 31 (b) Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students using their own university or college library at least once or twice a month

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Social sciences or humanities	8
(2)	Creative arts	92.4
(3)	Business, commerce or economics	91.7
(4)	Engineering	91.4
(5)	Pure or applied sciences	90.6
(6)	Management	87.6
(7)	Computing	82.4
(8)	Education	73.8
(9)	Medical sciences	70.2

Results

TABLE 31 (c) Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students who claim to use their own university or college library 'never' or 'rarely'

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Business, commerce or economics	0.6
(2)	Pure or applied sciences	1.6
(3)	Social sciences or humanities	1.7
(4)	Engineering	1.9
(5)	Creative arts	2.6
(6)	Medical sciences	2.6
(7)	Computing	2.9
(8)	Education	6.0
(9)	Management	6.3

These rankings brought some surprises. It had been hypothesised that students from the 'soft' sciences would use all types of libraries more, and more frequently, than those specialising in the 'hard' sciences, and that the order of ranking would be:

Social sciences or humanities
Creative arts
Education
Business, commerce, or economics
Management
Medical sciences
Pure or applied sciences
Computing
Engineering

However, the picture which emerged was no so straightforward. While certainly the social sciences or humanities; the creative arts; and business, commerce or economics rated highly in all three rankings, the high level of usage of their own academic libraries by students specialising in engineering and pure or applied sciences was unanticipated. Engineering ranked second in Table 31 (a), and fourth in (b) and (c). Pure or applied sciences was second in (c), fourth in (a), and fifth in (b). In both cases, there was little percentage-wise separating them from social sciences or humanities; the creative arts; and business, commerce or economics.

For each of the rankings, the lowest four positions were occupied by management; education; computing; and the medical sciences. In particular, the low rankings for education and management were quite unexpected . However, on examining crosstabulations for other types of libraries, a simple explanation emerged. Although education and management students, relatively speaking, made limited use of their own academic libraries, they were amongst the highest ranking users of other types of library, including other academic libraries. This fact is clearly revealed in rakings in subsequent sections.Rankings for medical sciences and computing were low for most other types of library, excepting 'library at work place', where they ranked third and fourth respectively. Perhaps because of the highly specialised and technical nature of these areas, greater reliance is placed on prescribed texts and supplied notes, with less emphasis on libraries, excepting highly specialised collections, such as a hospital library.

4.392 Other university or college libraries

Table 32 outlines three sets of rankings for the subject specialisations accounting for the greatest and most frequent usage of other academic libraries.

TABLE 32 : RANKINGS OF SUBJECT AREAS ACCOUNTING FOR THE GREATEST AND MOST FREQUENT USAGE OF OTHER UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARIES

(a) Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students using another university or college library at least once or twice a month

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Management	30.8
(2)	Education	23.9
(3)	Social sciences or humanities	22.4
(4)	Creative arts	20.0
(5)	Pure or applied sciences	15.1
(6)	Business, commerce or economics	13.9
(7)	Medical sciences	13.0
(8)	Engineering	10.1
(9)	Computing	10.0

TABLE 32 (b) Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students using another university or college library at least once in two or three months

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Education	40.2
(2)	Creative arts	40.0
(3)	Management	38.5
(4)	Social sciences or humanities	35.9
(5)	Computing	26.7
(6)	Medical sciences	24.6
(7)	Business, commerce or economics	21.2
(8)	Engineering	19.2
(9)	Pure or applied sciences	18.6

TABLE 32 (c) **Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students who claim to use other university or college libraries 'never' or 'rarely '**

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Education	36.9
(2)	Management	38.5
(3)	Social sciences or humanities	46.4
(4)	Creative arts	51.4
(5)	Computing	56.6
(6)	Medical sciences	57.9
(7)	Engineering	58.6
(8)	Business, commerce or economics	59.0
(9)	Pure or applied sciences	63.8

The most striking aspect of these rankings are the reversals evident when compared with the previous listings for respondents' own university or college libraries. Students of education and management, when finding their own collections inadequate, or materials unavailable, appear to find acceptable substitutes in other academic library collections. Engineering; pure or applied science; and business, commerce or economics students, on the other hand, seem to be more satisfied with their own academic libraries and to find relatively little need for outside library collections to cater for basic study needs.

Although supptanted in the top positions by education and management, the social sciences or humanities; and creative arts have retained high rankings. Computing has come up marginally in its ranking, while medical sciences occupies a similar, fairly low, ranking.

4.393 State Library of Victoria

Table 33 gives two sets of rankings of the subject specialisations accounting for the greatest and most frequent usage of the State Library of Victoria.

Results here are quite clear cut. It is evident that tertiary students find the strengths of the State Library of Victoria collections to be in the 'soft' sciences, and find the Library deficient in scientific and technical materials - judging by the minimal usage of these collections. However, it may be that science students have less need to use collections other than their own academic libraries.

Interestingly, in both rankings, creative arts surpassed the social sciences or humanities. Education; management; and business, commerce or economics attained relatively high rankings, considerably ahead of scientific and technological areas in percentage terms.

TABLE 33 : RANKINGS OF SUBJECT AREAS ACCOUNTING FOR THE GREATEST AND MOST FREQUENT USAGE OF THE STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA

(a) Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students using the State Library of Victoria at least once in two or three months

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Creative arts	35.2
(2)	Social sciences or humanities	22.1
(3)	Education	18.7
(4)	Management	15.4
(5)	Business, commerce or economics	12.2
(6)	Medical sciences	5.8
(7)	Pure or applied sciences	4.5
(8)	Engineering	3.2
(9)	Computing	0.0

TABLE 33 (b) Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students who claim they 'never' or 'rarely ' use the State Library of Victoria

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Creative arts	52.9
(2)	Social sciences or humanities	62.2
(3)	Education	66.3
(4)	Business, commerce or economics	75.5
(5)	Management	76.9
(6)	Engineering	79.8
(7)	Pure or applied sciences	82.3
(8)	Computing	82.8
(9)	Medical sciences	85.5

4.394 Local public libraries

Two sets of rankings of subject specialisations accounting for the greatest and most frequent usage of local public libraries are given in Table 34.

TABLE 34 : RANKINGS OF SUBJECT AREAS ACCOUNTING FOR THE GREATEST AND MOST FREQUENT USAGE OF LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

(a) Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students using their local public library at least once in two or three months

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Creative arts	52.9
(2)	Education	51.7
(3)	Management	50.0
(4)	Social sciences or humanities	49.7
(5)	Business, commerce or economics	34.8
(6)	Computing	34.4
(7)	Pure or applied sciences	32.0
(8)	Engineering	30.2
(9)	Medical sciences	28.0

TABLE 34 (b) Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students who claim they 'never' or 'rarely ' use their local public library

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Creative arts	27.7
(2)	Education	34.4
(3)	Management	35.7
(4)	Social sciences or humanities	36.4
(5)	Pure or applied sciences	40.5
(6)	Medical sciences	46.6
(7)	Business, commerce or economics	47.2
(8)	Engineering	52.1
(9)	Computing	55.2

As with the State Library of Victoria, students specialising in the 'soft' sciences appear to be much better catered for in public library collections than are those from the 'hard' sciences. Usage figures for the creative arts; education; management; and social sciences or humanities are very close, but in both rankings, creative arts outstrips the other three. Education and management students who were, relatively speaking, low users of their own academic libraries, appear to satisfy at least some of their course needs at their local public libraries. However, either business, commerce or economics students are less well served, or they have less of a need to use resources outside their own academic library collections. While students specialising in scientific and technological areas, in percentage terms, occupy the lowest rankings, there is still a fair amount of public library usage from this group. But, of course, this usage may be predominantly recreational in nature rather than course related.

4.395 Libraries at work place

Although relatively few students used a library at work, the rankings outlined in Table 35 present some interesting patterns. The four lowest ranking categories for usage of students' own university or college libraries rate as the four highest categories here. Percentage-wise, management accounts for much more usage than any other group, which is to be expected, seeing most management students are working and studying part time. A fair proportion of education and medical science students would also appear to be part timers. As well, some of the usage of work libraries is likely to be from full time students who may have access to relevant collections, e.g. in hospitals where medical students are residents; or in schools while students are on teaching rounds. All other areas account for proportionately much less work library usage. It is interesting to see that computing ranks far higher here than in rankings for other types of libraries.

TABLE 35 : RANKINGS OF SUBJECT AREAS ACCOUNTING FOR THE GREATEST AND MOST FREQUENT USAGE OF LIBRARIES AT THEIR PLACES OF WORK

(a) Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students using a library at their place of work at least once or twice a month

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Management	53.9
(2)	Education	35.7
(3)	Medical sciences	27.3
(4)	Computing	17.9
(5)	Social sciences or humanities	17.2
(6)	Creative arts	16.7
(7)	Business, commerce or economics	14.0
(8)	Pure or applied sciences	10.3
(9)	Engineering	8.8

TABLE 35 (b) **Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students who say they 'never' or 'rarely ' use a library at their places of work**

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Management	38.5
(2)	Education	54.8
(3)	Medical sciences	66.7
(4)	Social sciences or humanities	76.9
(5)	Computing	78.6
(6)	Business, commerce or economics	79.2
(7)	Creative arts	83.3
(8)	Engineering	85.6
(9)	Pure or applied sciences	86.0

4.396 Council of Adult Education Library

Due to the relatively few cases involved, this crosstabulation failed to produce statistically significant results, unlike the other crosstabulations discussed so far in this section (which all produced results which were statistically significant at the .05 level). Nevertheless, it may be of some interest to outline the areas from which the Council of Adult Education Library users came. 6.0% of education students (= 5 cases) used the library at least once or twice a year; compared with 3.2% of social sciences or humanities students (= 8 cases); 2.1% of business, commerce or economics students (= 3 cases); 1.5% of medical science students (= 1 case); and 1.1% of engineering students (= 1 case). There was no usage of the Council of Adult Education Library recorded for students of management; computing; pure or applied sciences or creative arts.

4.397 'Other' libraries

While figures cannot be given for particular types of libraries encompassed within this group, it is of some value to note the subject specialisations of students nominating an 'other' library. As explained in Section 4.38, it is worth bearing in mind that most of the libraries named as 'other' libraries were special libraries. Due to the small numbers involved, these results are also non-significant, statistically speaking.

TABLE 36 : RANKING OF SUBJECT AREAS ACCOUNTING FOR THE GREATEST AND MOST FREQUENT USAGE OF 'OTHER' LIBRARIES

Ranking of subject areas on the basis of percentages of students using an 'other' library at least once in two or three months

SUBJECT AREA		PERCENTAGE
(1)	Pure or applied sciences	27.4
(2)	Education	26.9
(3)	Medical sciences	26.4
(4)	Social sciences or humanities	23.5
(5)	Creative arts	20.1
(6)	Management	20.0
(7)	Computing	16.7
(8)	Business, commerce or economics	14.9
(9)	Engineering	14.3

4.4 USAGE OF UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARIES

In Section B of the questionnaire, respondents using their own university or college libraries were asked four questions pertaining to that usage.

4.41 Major reasons for using university or college libraries

Question 8, the introductory question in this section, was designed to ascertain the broad functions of academic libraries in the lives of students. Respondents were able to tick more than one of the options listed: course related / study needs; as a place to study; general interest / information unrelated to study; and recreational and leisure purposes.

While it was anticipated that the vast majority of respondents' usage of academic libraries would relate directly to course or study needs, the researcher also wished to discover the extent to which university or college libraries were used for general interest and recreational purposes. In 1964, Radford had found a significant level of usage of the Fisher Library, University of Sydney for recreational purposes, to the extent that he was concerned over the additional strain placed on the Library by the extent of students' recreational reading.[9]

Table 37 outlines frequencies data on students' main reasons for using academic libraries.

9 Neil A.Radford, 'The recreational reading of university students', *The Australian library journal*, vol. 14, no. 3, Sept. 1965, pp. 146 - 150.

TABLE 37 : MAJOR FUNCTIONS OF UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE LIBRARIES

FUNCTION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
(1) Course related / study needs (only)	215	21.4
(2) General interest / information unrelated to study (only)	4	0.4
(3) Recreational and leisure purposes (only)	4	0.4
(4) As a place to study (only)	10	1.0
(5) A combination of (1) to (4) above which includes 'recreational and leisure purposes'	154	15.3
(6) A combination of (1) to (4) above which does not include 'recreational and leisure purposes'	619	61.5
TOTAL	1,006	100.0

Missing cases = 25

Predictably, academic libraries were used overwhelmingly for course related purposes, and only to a minor degree for recreation. 84.3% of respondents used their university or college libraries solely for course related or study purposes and / or as a place to study and / or for general interest. Only a minority - 15.7% - used them for recreational purposes as well as for study. In the two 'Combination of . . .' headings in the Table, general interest / information unrelated to study accounted for relatively few cases, with the vast majority of combinations for (5) including course related purposes, as a place to study, and recreational purposes; and for (6) including course related purposes and as a place to study.

When the variable 'reasons for using academic library' was crosstabulated against a number of variables, only a few of the crosstabulations revealed any meaningful patterns or met the required tests of statistical significance at the 0.05 level. Those for mode of study; level of course; and age group were statistically significant, with significance levels of 0.0000; 0.0016; and 0.0000 respectively. With mode of study, full time students were slightly more likely to nominate recreation as one of the reasons for using their academic libraries than were part timers (16.9% c.f. 13.2%). A similar percentage applied to the crosstabulation by level of course, with 16.8% of undergraduates nominating recreation as a reason for using their university or college libraries c.f. 13.2% of postgraduates. In the crosstabulation by age group, younger students mentioned recreation more frequently than did older students, up till the 40 - 49 age group, where percentages citing recreation rose again. Of those under 20, 18.5% mentioned recreation; compared with 14.9% of those in their twenties; 13.9% of those in their thirties; and 17.2% of those in their forties. Undoubtedly, this pattern reflects the relative amounts of leisure time available in each age group.

Although statistically non-significant, the raw data presented in a couple of the other corsstabulations may be of some interest. With educational institution, 21.0% of students from Swinburne I T said they also used their academic library for recreational purposes; compared with 16.8% from Melbourne C A E; 15.7% each for the University of Melbourne and Footscray I T ; and 9.7% for La Trobe University.

In the crosstabulation by subject specialisation, which narrowly missed the 0.05 level of significance (Significance = 0.0982), the relative ranking of subject categories for those citing recreation as a reason for using their academic library was as outlined below in Table 38.

This ranking would seem to reflect to some extent the types of libraries students use - pure or applied science and engineering students, while high users of their own tertiary libraries, used relatively few other libraries - as seen in Sections 4.391 - 4. 397. Apparently this also involves a greater usage of academic libraries as a source of recreational or general interest materials.

TABLE 38 : RANKING OF AREAS OF SUBJECT SPECIALISATION OF THOSE CITING 'RECREATION' AS A REASON FOR USING THEIR UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARIES

	SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
(1)	Pure or applied sciences	20.7
(2)	Management	20.0
(3)	Education	17.7
(4)	Engineering	17.3
(5)	Social sciences or humanities	15.2
(6)	Medical sciences	14.7
(7)	Creative arts	13.1
(8)	Business, commerce or economics	12.8
(9)	Computing	9.9

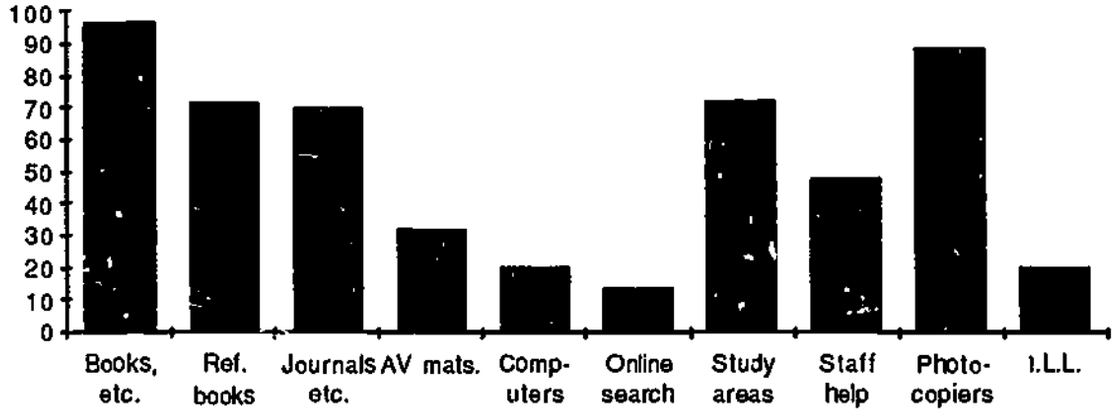
4.42 Resources, services and facilities used in university or college libraries

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the following resources, services and facilities they used in their university and college libraries:

Books and other materials for loan
Reference books
Journals and newspapers
Audiovisual materials and equipment
Computers
Online database searches
Study areas
Assistance from library staff
Photocopiers
Interlibrary loans

An 'Other (Please specify)' option was also provided.

The following histogram portrays the results:



Carrying this analysis a little further, the ranking which follows in Table 39 demonstrates clearly the most used to the least used resources, services and facilities in academic libraries:

TABLE 39 : RESOURCES, SERVICES AND FACILITIES USED IN UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RESOURCE, SERVICE OR FACILITY	USED BY RESPONDENT		NOT USED BY RESPONDENT		TOTAL		MISSING CASES
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Books and other materials for loan	975	96.9	31	3.1	1006	100.0	25
Photocopiers	898	88.7	114	11.3	1007	100.0	24
Study areas	728	72.2	280	27.8	1008	100.0	23
Reference books	719	71.4	288	28.6	1007	100.0	24
Journals and newspapers	702	69.6	306	30.4	1008	100.0	23
Library staff assistance	478	47.4	530	52.6	1008	100.0	23
Audiovisual materials	321	31.9	686	68.1	1007	100.0	24
Interlibrary loans	205	20.4	802	79.6	1007	100.0	24
Computers	200	19.8	808	80.2	1008	100.0	23
Online searches	141	14.0	866	86.0	1007	100.0	24

Predictably, loans services were the most popular, almost universally used by students. The introduction of photocopiers into libraries has added a vital new dimension to library services - in the relatively short span of time since they were introduced, outstripping in popularity all other services except loans services. One reason for the greater use of photocopying is undoubtedly the increasing reliance on Reserve collections in academic libraries. as a means of reducing the number of multiple copies needing to be purchased in a time of economic hardship. As one respondent observed: '*A couple of hours to use a book is inevitably insufficient. Thus photocopying becomes a significant and sometimes insurmountable expense.*' Although almost three quarters of respondents indicated that they used library study areas, I had expected this figure to be a little higher, with most students making use of study areas at some time. Perhaps the extensive use of photocopying has reduced the need for today 's students, compared with students of fifteen or so years ago, to study in the library. It was also anticipated that more students would make more use of reference collections, journals and newspapers - three out of every ten respondents failed to make use of these resources.

Results

The extradordinarily low incidence of preparedness to call on library staff assistance in academic libraries, with more than half of respondents not utilising help from library staff, is consistent with the findings of Kosa[10], and Hatchard and Toy [11] reported in the literature review. These authors attributed this phenomenon largely to a psychological barrier existing between the student and the librarian. As this barrier means that many of the academic library's resources and services are considerably underutilised, the authors advocated a more concerted effort in the area of user education, and more attention to factors acting as deterrents to students needing to ask for help - e.g. the physical set up of the reference area, and approachability of staff at the reference desk. The current research reinforces the need for such action.

Less than one third of respondents reported using audiovisual collections; only one in five, interlibrary loans services or computers; and one in seven, online searches. Naturally, a low incidence of reported usage of these services may be attributable to limited facilities/ equipment in some libraries; to policy restrictions on service; or to the expense of the service, e.g. a charge for an online search. However, a lack of awareness of services offered; a lack of training in how to use particular services or equipment items; and the reticence of a majority of students to ask for assistance when they need it are undoubtedly other factors.

With such results, there is obviously considerable scope in academic libraries for user education programs aimed at raising the awareness of services offered and training students in all aspects of library use; and at improving the professional image of librarians - providing positive experiences for students which will reinforce the view of librarians as caring professionals who are both willing and able to assist students in fulfilling their information needs.

Although twenty respondents ticked the 'Other' option, almost half of them failed to specify what other services they used. Three mentioned consulting past examination papers. Two made reference to maps, one being 'maps for bushwalking'. A couple refered to special collections in their academic libraries. One respondent claimed that a major attraction of the Library was its *'toilets - because they are cleaner than anywhere else at Uni.!'* A few references were obscure, e.g. *'Discussions'* ; *'Coffee and biscuits available'*, or comments on earlier options, e.g. *'We don't have any computers'*; *'Photocopiers often aren't working'*.

Comparing results for the 854 early responses with the 177 late ones received after mailing the follow up letter, revealed that all services listed were used more by early respondents than by late respondents. Most of these differences were marginal: books, etc. 97.1% c.f. 95.0%; audiovisual materials 32.3% c.f. 30.1%; computers 20.0% c.f. 19.3%; online searches 14.3% c.f. 12.5%; photocopiers 89.2% c.f. 85.8%. However, a few were more pronounced: reference books 73.8% c.f. 60.2%; journals and newspapers 71.3% c.f. 61.9%; staff assistance 49.0% c.f. 39.8%; study areas 73.2% c.f. 67.6%. As part timers were more likely to return questionnaires late than were full timers, it may be that these discrepancies reflect differences between full time and part time students, with part timers either having less time or fewer opportunities to use services such as reference books; journals and newspapers; study areas; and library staff assistance; or having these needs met in other libraries they use.

The possibility that library services used were affected by part time vs. full time status was explored by crosstabulating each of the services listed by mode of study. Most of the percentages for full time and part time students' use of particular services were close, failing to produce statistically significant results. Generally full timers used most services slightly more than part timers. The only resources or services for which statistically significant differences were recorded for full timers and part timers were [respectively] reference books (74.4% c.f. 66.1%); computers (22.7% c.f. 13.9%); study areas (80.8% c.f. 52.6%); and photocopiers (93.1% c.f. 78.5%). As I mentioned earlier, part timers may lack the time to use such services, but they may also have less need than do full timers for these services in their academic

10 Geza A. Kosa, 'The psychological barrier between college students and the librarian', *Australian academic & research libraries*, vol. 13, no. 2, June 1982, pp. 107-112.

11 Desmond B. Hatchard & Phyllis Toy, 'The psychological barriers between library users and library staff: an expioratory investigation', *Australian academic & research libraries*, vol. 17, no. 2, June 1986, pp. 63 - 69.

libraries. Most part timers are likely to have access to photocopying facilities, and many to computers, at work. If they work for an organisation with its own library, reference books and study areas would be provided. Being financially independent, part timers are also more likely than full timers to have access to adequate quiet study areas at home.

Table 40 summarises differences in usage of services in academic libraries by full time and part time students. For each service, significance level and Cramer's V correlation measures are indicated. The only four results which are statistically significant at the .05 level are indicated with an asterisk.

TABLE 40 : SUMMARY OF CROSSTABULATIONS OF PARTICULAR UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY SERVICES BY MODE OF STUDY

LIBRARY SERVICE	PERCENTAGE OF FULL TIME STUDENTS INDICATING THEY USE THE SERVICE	PERCENTAGE OF PART TIME STUDENTS INDICATING THEY USE THE SERVICE	SIGNIF-ICANCE LEVEL (* statistically significant result)	CRAMER'S V
Books and other materials for loan	96.6	97.1	0.8785	0.03473
Reference books	74.4	66.1	*0.0000	0.14121
Journals and newspapers	69.8	69.7	0.78 [illegible]	0.02222
Audiovisual materials	32.8	31.4	0.2939	0.04953
Computers	22.7	13.9	*0.0024	0.10998
Online searches	13.7	15.7	0.3176	0.04794
Study areas	80.8	52.6	*0.0000	0.32483
Library staff assistance	47.3	47.8	0.8862	0.01555
Photocopiers	93.1	78.5	*0.0000	0.18386
Interlibrary loans	19.9	21.1	0.4905	0.04130

Results

Level of course had an impact on extent of use of [illegible] Postgraduates were more likely than undergraduates [illegible] academic libraries. 79.0% of postgraduates claimed [illegible] compared with 68.0% of undergraduates. (Chi square [illegible] 0.0493, Cramer's V = 0.13592). On the other hand, more undergraduates [illegible] visual materials than did postgraduates. 33.8% of [illegible] 25.6% respectively. [illegible] = 5, Significance = 0.0013, Cramer's V = 0.14167)

With online searches, there was a steady increase in usage with level of course. Results were highly significant, statistically speaking, with a quite strong correlation. (Chi square = 83.29369, df = 5, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.29021). Only [illegible] undergraduate diploma respondents claimed to have had online [illegible] academic libraries, compared with 10.8% of those studying for an undergraduate [illegible] 18.1% for a postgraduate diploma, 39.1% for Masters, and 59.3% for a doctorate.

Academic library study areas were utilised by almost twice the number of undergraduates than postgraduates: 78.5% of undergraduates mentioned using study areas in university and college libraries, while only 42.5% of postgraduates did so. Again, results were highly significant, with a strong correlation. (Chi square = [illegible], df = [illegible], Significance = [illegible], Cramer's V = 0.30347)

Use of photocopiers in academic libraries also decreased with increasing level of course. Overall, 91.8% of undergraduates and 76.0% of postgraduates used academic library photocopiers. The more specific breakdowns of photocopier usage were: [illegible] of undergraduate diploma respondents, 91.8% of those studying for undergraduate degrees, 78.7% for postgraduate diplomas, 76.0% for Masters, and 70.4% for doctorates. This tendency may be partly attributable to the higher incidence of photocopying of reserve materials by students at undergraduate level, or perhaps to the availability of alternative photocopying facilities to many students studying at higher levels. A related issue is the extent to which library photocopiers are used to copy non-library items, e.g. students' notes and assignments, due to the non-availability of photocopiers elsewhere on campus, adding a considerable strain to already overworked library facilities, and causing mounting frustration for those who have to stand for unreasonable periods of time in long queues.

Predictably, given policy restrictions on the use of interlibrary loans by undergraduates in force at many tertiary institutions, postgraduates were by far the greatest [illegible] facilities. Only 15.9% of undergraduates claimed to have used interlibrary [illegible] compared with 39.8% of postgraduates. Category by category, the rising incidence of interlibrary lending with increasing level of course is clearly revealed. 4.5% of undergraduate diploma, 15.5% of undergraduate degree; 22.3% of postgraduate diploma; 43.5% of Masters; and 92.6% of doctoral respondents utilised this facility. Again results are highly significant, and the two variables strongly correlated. (Chi square = 125.47568, df = 5, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.25186). In the light of the restrictions on interlibrary lending by undergraduates, it is not surprising that undergraduates were greater users of interlibrary loans facilities in public libraries than were postgraduates.

4.43 Degree of satisfaction with services provided by university or college libraries

To ascertain the relative degree of satisfaction with library services provided by university and college libraries, and to highlight possible problem areas, respondents were asked to indicate on a five point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree', their level of concurrence with the following six statements:

(a) ' I usually obtain the materials I need from the university / college library.'

(b) 'I have received adequate instruction on the use of the university / college library , its catalogues and collections.'

(c) 'I find library staff at my university / college library helpful and approachable.'

(d) 'Often I find the materials I need (although listed in the catalogue) are not available: not on the shelves, on loan.'

(e) 'I find my university / college library a suitable place for study.'

(f) 'If my university / college library does not have the title I need, library staff obtain it for me from another library.'

While there is no cause for complacency, results overall reveal a high degree of satisfaction with most existing services in university and college libraries. However, it is worth noting that rating scales of this nature tend to be biased towards positive responses. Two major problem areas highlighted were lack of availability of materials when needed; and failure to arrange for interlibrary loans. Unsuitable study areas and inadequate user instruction were problems for a minority of respondents. 'Other comments' given at the end of the questionnaire provided further insights into particular problem areas experienced by students.

(a) ' I usually obtain the materials I need from the university / college library.'

As shown in Table 41, 82.7% of respondents agreed that they usually obtained the materials they needed from their academic libraries; 7.8% disagreed; and 9.6% were undecided.

TABLE 41 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE PROVISION OF MATERIALS IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY

DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I usually obtain the materials I need from my university / college library'*)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	333	33.1
Agree	498	49.6
Neutral / undecided	96	9.6
Disagree	68	6.8
Strongly disagree	10	1.0
TOTAL	1,005	100.1

Missing cases = 26

Results

Crosstabulating satisfaction with provision of materials by educational institution revealed some differences between institutions. Respondents from Swinburne I T were the most satisfied, with 90.7% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that they usually obtained the materials they needed from their academic library. Swinburne students also had the lowest dissatisfaction rate, with only 2.5% disagreeing with the statement. Melbourne CAE had the next highest satisfaction rate - 86.0%, but as well the second highest dissatisfaction rate of the five institutions - 9.3%. Results for the two universities were very similar: La Trobe University having a satisfaction rate of 82.0% and a dissatisfaction rate of 8.4%; and the University of Melbourne a satisfaction rate of 81.8% and a dissatisfaction rate of 8.1%. Of the five institutions, Footscray I T had both the lowest satisfaction rate - 74.8% - and the highest dissatisfaction rate - 10.1%.

Many students from Footscray I T highlighted problems with inadequate provision of study materials in the 'Other comments' section at the end of the questionnaire. A few examples:

> *' The main problem I find with F.I.T.'s Library is that there is never enough books to cover the students, e.g. one book on a subject reading list is expected to be shared between 30 students.'*
>
> *'People just dive on the books available; books on closed reserve are hard to gain in normal hours.'*
>
> *'Often it is hard to gel books that I need because this Library has a small number of books.'*
>
> *'F.I.T. library is appalling, in respect to materials for in-depth study and for extracurricular reference. I believe this is due to financing - especially for journals and periodicals.'*
>
> *'The College Library has a tong way to go before it will be able to provide sufficient relevant information for students.'*
>
> *'At F.I.T. I have problems with the availability of books related to my course because the course is new.'*

Few students from the other four institutions complained in the 'Other comments' section of poor provision of study materials in their academic libraries, although some lamented the unavailability of titles owned by the library at the times they were needed. Both universities were applauded by some students for their provision of relevant study materials, e.g.:

> *' The services offered by the Borchardt Library , I consider excellent.'*
>
> *'Our Uni. Library is great considering its relatively young age.'*
>
> *'The Baillieu Library is a wonderful library . . . superior to anything else available in Victoria.'*
>
> *'Provision of course related and general interest books at Melbourne Uni. is excellent.'*

Table 42 gives the crosstabulation of satisfaction with materials provision at university / college libraries by educational institution.

TABLE 42 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE PROVISION OF MATERIALS IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I usually obtain the materials I need from my university/college library'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
University of Melbourne	31.7	50.1	10.0	6.7	1.4	99.9	419
La Trobe University	40.4	41.6	9.6	8.4	-	100.0	166
Melbourne C A E	31.8	54.2	4.7	8.4	0.9	100.0	107
Swinburne I T	36.4	54.3	6.8	2.5	-	100.0	162
Footscray I T	24.4	50.4	15.1	7.6	2.5	100.0	119

N = 973
Missing cases = 58
Chi square = 31.59444, df = 20, significance = 0.0478
Cramer's V = 0.08955

Analysing the distribution by mode of study showed that full timers had marginally higher levels of satisfaction with the provision of materials in their academic libraries than did part timers. Full time respondents had an 83.7% satisfaction rate and a 5.9% dissatisfaction rate; compared with 82.1% and 10.6%, respectively, for part time respondents. Table 43 presents the results.

TABLE 43 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE PROVISION OF MATERIALS IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I usually obtain the materials I need from my university/college library'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
Full time student	34.8	48.9	10.4	4.6	1.3	100.0	712
Part time student	30.3	51.8	7.3	10.2	0.4	100.0	274
External student	20.0	20.0	20.0	40.0	-	100.0	10

N = 996
Missing cases = 35
Chi square = 35.46245, df = 8, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.13343

A similar trend was reinforced in the crosstabulation by age group, which shows a decreasing level of satisfaction with the provision of materials with increasing age. In the under-20s, there was an 83.7% satisfaction rate, and a 5.0% dissatisfaction rate; compared with 84.0% and 7.0% respectively for those in their twenties; 80.1% and 10.3% for those in their thirties; and 77.9% and 13.6% for those in their forties. While respondents in their fifties recorded a 66.7% satisfaction rate and a 22.2% dissatisfaction rate; and those in their sixties, a 50.0% satisfaction rate, and a 25.0% dissatisfaction rate, numbers of cases involved in the two age brackets are too few to be statistically valid. Possibly with increasing age and experience, service expectations rise, and subsequent ratings fall. Table 44 documents this trend.

TABLE 44 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE PROVISION OF MATERIALS IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY AGE GROUP

AGE GROUP	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I usually obtain the materials I need from my university / college library'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutrall / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
15 - 19 years	32.0	51.7	11.2	4.6	0.4	99.9	259
20 - 24 years	39.2	47.5	7.6	4.5	1.2	100.0	423
25 - 29 years	23.8	49.5	14.3	10.5	1.9	100.0	105
30 - 39 years	30.1	50.0	9.6	10.3	-	100.0	136
40 - 49 years	25.4	52.5	8.5	10.2	3.4	100.0	59
50 - 59 years	-	66.7	11.1	22.2	-	100.0	9
60 - 69 years	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	-	100.0	4

N = 995
Missing cases = 36
Chi square = 42.79716, df = 24, significance = 0.0105
Cramer's V = 0.10370

No meaningful trends emerged in the crosstabulations of degree of satisfaction with provision of materials by level of course or by field of subject specialisation.

(b) 'I have received adequate instruction on the use of the university / college library , its catalogues and collections.'

Although the majority of responses were positive, there was a higher incidence of disagreement and neutral responses here compared with the first option. As shown in Table 45 , 67.2% of respondents considered the user instruction they were given to be adequate; 16.2% were undecided; and 16.5% considered it inadequate. With a third of respondents failing to agree with the statement, there is obviously scope for improvement of user education programs.

TABLE 45 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE USER EDUCATION PROGRAM IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY

DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I have received adequate instruction in the use of my university/college library, its catalogues and collections'*)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	173	17.2
Agree	502	50.0
Neutral / undecided	163	16.2
Disagree	137	13.6
Strongly disagree	29	2.9
TOTAL	1,004	99.9

Missing cases = 27

Degree of satisfaction with user education programs varied between the five institutions. Swinburne students were both the most satisfied and the least dissatisfied, with 86.4% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that they had received adequate instruction in the use of their academic library, its catalogues and collections, and only 4.3% disagreeing. Results for Footscray I T and La Trobe University were similar, with a 74.0%

satistaction rate, and a 13.5% dissatistaction rate 1or Footscray I T; and a 73.5% satistaction rate and a 9.6% dissatisfaction rate 1or La Trobe University. Melbourne C A E had a 61.3% satisfaction rate and a 20.7% dissatisfaction rate; and the University of Melbourne a 56.9% satistaction rate and a 23.4% dissatistaction rate. This data is presented in Table 46.

TABLE 46 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE USER EDUCATION PROGRAM IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent 01 agreement with the statement: *'I have received adequate instruction in the use of my university/college library, its catalogues and collections'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutrat / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
University of Melbourne	9.3	47.6	19.8	20.5	2.9	100.1	420
La Trobe University	23.5	50.0	16.9	7.2	2.4	100.0	166
Melbourne C A E	15.1	46.2	17.9	16.0	4.7	99.9	106
Swinburne I T	31 :	55.3	9.3	4.3	-	100.0	161
Footscray I T	20.2	53.8	12.6	10.1	3.4	100.1	119

N = 972
Missing cases = 59
Chi square = 88.31088, df = 20, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.14979

Results

The crosstabulation of degree of satisfaction with user education programs with mode of study revealed some differences, but relatively minor ones, between full time and part time students. Full timers were slightly more likely to agree and less likely to disagree with the statement that 'I have received adequate instruction in the use of my university / college library . . .' than were part timers, with a 68.3% satisfaction rate and a 15.5% dissatisfaction rate; compared with 66.0% and 17.7%, respectively, for part time respondents. See Table 47 for details.

TABLE 47 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE USER EDUCATION PROGRAM IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I have received adequate instruction in the use of my university/college library, its catalogues and collections'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral/ Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
Full time student	17.1	51.2	16.2	13.3	2.2	100.0	715
Part time student	17.7	48.3	16.2	14.4	3.3	99.9	271
External student	33.3	11.1	11.1	22.2	22.2	99.9	9

N = 995
Missing cases = 36
Chi square = 18.83981, df = 8, significance = 0.0157
Cramer's V = 0.09730

Results for the crosstabulations by level of course; age group; and field of subject specialisation were less clear cut, with no distinct patterns emerging, and statistically non-significant.

(c) 'I find library staff at my university / college library helpful and approachable.'

Generally, library staff were regarded as helpful and approachable, with over three quarters of respondents agreeing with the statement and only 5.2% disagreeing. The relatively high incidence of neutral responses (19.0%) is likely to indicate lack of interaction of the students with library staff. As 52.6% of respondents said they did not approach library staff for help (as outlined in Section 4.42), it appears that many students answered this question from a theoretical stance rather than from personal experience.

TABLE 48 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH LIBRARY STAFF ASSISTANCE IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY

DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I find library staff at my univ[illegible]y/college library helpful and approachable'*)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	263	26.1
Agree	500	49.7
Neutral / undecided	191	19.0
Disagree	44	4.4
Strongly disagree	8	0.8
TOTAL	1,006	100.0

Missing cases = 25

Perceived helpfulness and approachability of library staff did vary between the institutions. 91.3% of respondents from Swinburne agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that library staff were helpful and approachable; only one person (0.6%) disagreed with the statement. La Trobe University followed, with an 84.3% satisfaction rate and only 3.0%

disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Percentages for Footscray I T were close to those for La Trobe University: an 83.4% satisfaction rate, and a 4.1% dissatisfaction rate. Results for the University of Melbourne and Melbourne C A E were similar: the University of Melbourne with a 68.9% satisfaction rate and a 7.0% dissatisfaction rate; and Melbourne C A E, a 62.6% satisfaction rate and an 8.4% dissatisfaction rate.

TABLE 49 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH LIBRARY STAFF ASSISTANCE IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I find library staff at my university / college library helpful and approachable'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
University of Melbourne	18.1	50.8	24.1	6.0	1.0	100.0	419
La Trobe University	33.1	51.2	12.7	1.8	1.2	100.0	166
Melbourne C A E	21.5	41.1	29.0	7.5	0.9	100.0	107
Swinburne I T	43.8	47.5	8.0	0.6	-	99.9	162
Footscray I T	23.1	60.3	12.4	4.1	-	99.9	121

N = 975
Missing cases = 56
Chi square = 94.06922, df = 20, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.15436

The crosstabulation of degree of satisfaction with staff assistance by mode of study shows that full time respondents were slightly less likely to view library staff as helpful and approachable than were part timers. Perhaps the relative maturity of the student in some way affects their interaction with library staff. 74.4% of full timers agreed that library staff were helpful and approachable; 5.2% disagreed; while 80.6% of part timers agreed, and 5.1% disagreed.

TABLE 50 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH LIBRARY STAFF ASSISTANCE IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I find library staff at my university/college library helpful and approachable'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
Full time student	24.1	50.3	20.4	4.8	0.4	100.0	715
Part time student	31.1	49.5	14.3	3.3	1.8	100.0	273
External student	40.0	20.0	30.0	10.0	-	100.0	10

N = 998
Missing cases = 33
Chi square = 17.63817, df = 8, significance = 0.0241
Cramer's V = 0.09400

Although there are a few exceptions, the crosstabulation by age group does demonstrate a tendency for more positive evaluations of staff helpfulness and approachability with increasing age. This reinforces the idea just alluded to that library staff may interact more positively with more mature and experienced students. 65.0% of the under-twenties viewed library staff as helpful and approachable, compared with 78.9% of those aged 20 - 24 years; 81.0% of those

aged 25 - 29; 82.4% in their thirties; 74.6% in their forties; 69.3% in their fifties; and 100.0% in their sixties. The percentage for the forties age bracket counters the general trend; while figures given for those in their fifties and sixties are not reliable because of the small numbers involved.

TABLE 51 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH LIBRARY STAFF ASSISTANCE IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY AGE GROUP

AGE GROUP	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I find library staff at my university/college library helpful and approachable'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
15 - 19 years	18.1	46.9	30.0	4.6	0.4	100.0	260
20 - 24 years	26.2	52.7	16.1	4.5	0.5	100.0	423
25 - 29 years	32.4	48.6	12.4	4.8	1.9	100.1	105
30 - 39 years	32.4	50.0	14.7	2.2	0.7	100.0	136
40 - 49 years	37.3	37.3	18.6	3.4	3.4	100.0	59
50 - 59 years	22.2	66.7	11.1	-	-	100.0	9
60 - 69 years	25.0	75.0	-	-	-	100.0	4

N = 996
Missing cases = 35
Chi square = 49.95229, df = 24, significance = 0.0014
Cramer's V = 0.11197

(d) 'Often I find the materials I need (although listed in the catalogue) are not available: not on the shelves, on loan.'

The perennial student problem of unavailability of library materials when needed is strongly reflected in respondents' reactions to this statement, with 56.0% claiming materials often were unavailable; and only 19.5% disagreeing. Almost one quarter (24.4%) were undecided. It is possible that the implied negative in the statement may have affected some responses. Nevertheless, lack of availability of materials is a serious cause for concern. In times of financial stringency, when library budgets can never stretch to procure sufficient multiple copies to fulfill demand, libraries need to give further thought to other means of increasing availability of materials, e.g. differentiated loans periods - short term loans for known high demand items, and longer term loans for items not in demand.

Table 52 outlines frequencies data for this question.

TABLE 52 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE AVAILABILITY OF MATERIALS IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY

DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of disagreement with the statement: *'I often find the materials I need, although listed in the catalogue, are unavailable'*)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	200	20.0
Agree	359	36.0
Neutral / undecided	244	24.4
Disagree	177	17.7
Strongly disagree	18	1.8
TOTAL	998	99.9

Missing cases = 33

Results

Results for materials availability at each of the institutions were very close. In response to the statement 'Often I find the materials I need are unavailable', 53.7% of respondents from Swinburne I T agreed with the statement; as did 56.3% of respondents from the University of Melbourne; 57.0% from La Trobe University; 57.2% from Footscray I T; and 57.3% from Melbourne C A E. Percentages disagreeing with the statement, i.e. claiming that materials needed were generally available, were also similar: 20.2% from the University of Melbourne; 20.0% from La Trobe University; 19.1% from Swinburne I T; 18.4% from Melbourne C A E; and 16.8% from Footscray I T.

TABLE 53 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE AVAILABILITY OF MATERIALS IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of dis agreement with the statement: *'I often find the materials I need, although listed in the catalogue, are unavailable'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
University of Melbourne	21.8	34.5	23.5	18.5	1.7	100.0	417
La Trobe University	17.0	40.0	23.0	17.0	3.0	100.0	165
Melbourne C A E	23.3	34.0	24.3	16.5	1.9	100.0	103
Swinburne I T	14.8	38.9	27.2	19.1	-	100.0	162
Footscray I T	24.4	32.8	26.1	15.1	1.7	100.1	119

N = 966
Missing cases = 65
Chi square = 31.28919, df = 20, significance = 0.0515*
Cramer's V = 0.08943

* NOTE: This significance level is marginally outside the set level of 0.05

When degree of satisfaction with the availability of materials in university and college libraries was crosstabulated by mode of study, and by age group, no clear patterns emerged; results were statistically non-significant.

However, level of course had an impact on ratings. Undergraduates and postgraduate diploma students complained much more about the unavailability of items than did higher degree students. While 48.6% of undergraduate diploma; 58.2% of undergraduate degree; and 59.1% of postgraduate diploma students were seriously inconvenienced by materials unavailability, indicating agreement or strong agreement with the statement, this was true for only 29.0% of respondents studying for a Masters; and 38.5% of those enrolled at doctoral level. (Chi square = 45.62956, df = 20, Significance = 0.0009, Cramer's V = 0.10789).

The crosstabulation by field of subject specialisation was also statistically significant, and presents some interesting trends. The greatest dissatisfaction over unavailability of materials came from the 'soft' sciences, the more literary subjects, while the scientific and technological areas recorded the highest levels of satisfaction. Engineering students were the least dissatisfied, with only 37.2% agreeing with the statement; followed by computing students at 42.5%; students specialising in the pure or applied sciences (46.6%); and medical sciences (48.0%). Students of management recorded a 53.3% rate of dissatisfaction over materials unavailability; followed closely by education students with 54.9%. However, the most dissatisfied were students of the creative arts (60.0%); business, commerce or economics (60.1%); and social sciences and humanities (66.6%).

TABLE 54 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE AVAILABILITY OF MATERIALS IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY AREA OF SUBJECT SPECIALISATION

SUBJECT AREA	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of disagreement with the statement: *'I often find the materials I need, although listed in the catalogue, are unavailable.'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
Pure or applied sciences	13.8	32.8	30.2	20.7	2.6	100.1	116
Medical sciences	12.0	36.0	25.3	22.7	4.0	100.0	75
Engineering	8.8	28.4	38.2	23.5	1.0	99.9	102
Computing	15.2	27.3	48.5	9.1	-	100.1	33
Social sciences or humanities	25.5	41.1	16.0	15.6	1.8	100.0	282
Creative arts	20.0	40.0	20.0	17.1	2.9	100.0	35
Education	23.2	31.6	29.5	13.7	2.1	100.1	95
Business, commerce or economics	22.1	38.0	22.1	16.6	1.2	100.0	163
Management	20.0	33.3	20.0	26.7	-	100.0	15
'Other' subject areas	22.1	41.2	14.7	20.6	1.5	100.1	68

N = 984
Missing cases = 47
Chi square = 64.97272, df = 36, significance = 0.0022
Cramer's V = 0.12848

(e) 'I find my university / college library a suitable place for study.'

While a majority of respondents (61.7%) considered their university or college libraries suitable places for study, a significant minority (17.5%) disagreed; 20.7% were undecided.

An analysis of 'Other comments' at the end of the questionnaire was revealing here, with many students expressing dissatisfaction with noisy, overcrowded and congested libraries. Problems such as inadequate supervision of study areas; location of study areas adjacent to major traffic routes within the library; unavailability of seats during peak periods; and inability to concentrate due to high ambient noise levels and frequent distractions, were mentioned frequently. Obviously, such concerns were uppermost in the minds of the 175 students here who did not consider their academic libraries suitable places for study. Table 55 provides the frequencies data for this option.

TABLE 55 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE STUDY AREA IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY

DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I find my university/college library a suitable place for study'*)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	168	16.8
Agree	449	44.9
Neutral / undecided	207	20.7
Disagree	133	13.3
Strongly disagree	42	4.2
TOTAL	999	99.9

Missing cases = 32

Crosstabulating results by educational institution showed the three colleges of advanced education to be less conducive to quiet study than were the universities. Footscray I T came off the worst, with 52.5% of respondents agreeing with the statement, and 26.3% disagreeing. 56.8% of Melbourne C A E students agreed, with 19.2% disagreeing; and from Swinburne I T, 58.7% agreed and 13.6% disagreed. At the University of Melbourne, 64.0% of respondents considered their library a suitable place for private study, while 17.4% disagreed. La Trobe University fared best, with 66.7% agreeing, and 15.1% disagreeing with the statement.

The high incidence of dissatisfaction with study areas amongst Footscray I T students, was reinforced by students' 'Other comments' at the end of the questionnaire. The following statements are illustrative:

> *' F.I.T. Library is very crowded; sometimes I can't find a place to study.'*
>
> *' F.I.T. Library is far too small and gets excessively crowded. Universities are far superior as far as space and privacy is concerned. The Library is too tiny for a student population in excess of 3,500.'*
>
> *'The distractions (inconsiderate students) one has to put up with in the study area of my college library is disgraceful! '*
>
> *'At F.I.T., there is no room to study, and many people talk too much, and the young boys swear too much in the Library.'*
>
> *'The size and space in our library at F.I.T. could be extended as the Library is often very full.'*
>
> *'At F.I.T., the number of students has increased, but library size (especially for studying) has remained constant. Therefore it is always hard to find room to sit and study.'*
>
> *'The structure and design of F.I.T. Library isn't conducive to study. In fact, there are no areas where students can study properly.'*

Far fewer negative comments on study areas came from other institutions. A couple of respondents from Melbourne C A E complained about noisy conditions in the Library:

> *'Study areas are extremely noisy - some students 'study' with head phone radios on full blast!'*
>
> *'While study accommodation at my college library is ideal, most often concentration is impossible because of the noise from conversation.'*

A few respondents from Swinburne I T highlighted noise and distractions from others, e.g.:

> *'Although there are quiet areas allocated, that is never the case when trying to study. There are always people walking around finding books, which is very distracting, or they are talking loudly to their friends in a supposedly 'Quiet' area.'*

Another Swinburne respondent complained of students smoking in 'No Smoking' areas.

At the University of Melbourne, ventilation and lighting posed major problems to some students, as evidenced in the following comments:

> *' It is difficult to tolerate overheating, stuffiness and harsh fluorescent lighting, as well as the lack of a refreshment / rest area. [This] . . . affects my decision to study in it.'*

Results

' It is difficult to tolerate overheating, stuffiness and harsh fluorescent lighting, as well as the lack of a refreshment / rest area. [This] . . . affects my decision to study in it.'

' The overall atmosphere is not conducive to study as it is far too stuffy.'

'Melbourne University Library is always too hot and stuffy to sit and study in - promotes sleep rather than study.'

'I avoid studying in the Baillieu Library when possible, primarily due to the atrocious lighting and arrangement of study desks. The lighting and ventilation alone cause study fatigue in a most annoying and unavoidable way.'

No negative comments on study areas were made by respondents from La Trobe University. One student commented:

'I have found La Trobe University Library an excellent environment to study in, with highly adequate facilities . . . and patrol staff who control the talking levels in quiet study areas.'

Table 56 provides breakdowns of ratings of the adequacy of study areas in university or college libraries by educational institution.

TABLE 56 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH STUDY AREA IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I find my university/college library a suitable place for study'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
University of Melbourne	15.3	48.7	18.6	13.8	3.6	100.0	419
La Trobe University	26.7	40.0	16.2	12.1	3.0	100.0	165
Melbourne C A E	10.6	46.2	24.0	14.4	4.8	100.0	104
Swinburne I T	16.7	42.0	27.8	8.0	5.6	100.1	162
Footscray I T	12.7	39.8	21.2	19.5	6.8	100.0	118

N = 968
Missing cases = 63
Chi square = 40.10017, df = 20, significance = 0.0285
Cramer's V = 0.09037

Full time students were more likely to agree with the statement 'I find my university or college library a suitable place for study ' than were part timers, as shown in the ensuing table (Table 57). 65.0% of full time respondents agreed; c.f. 53.9% of part timers.

TABLE 57 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH STUDY AREA IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I find my university / college library a suitable place for study'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
Full time student	18.5	46.5	18.3	13.2	3.5	100.0	710
Part time student	13.3	40.6	27.7	14.0	4.4	100.0	271
External student	-	44.4	22.2	11.1	22.2	99.9	9

N = 990
Missing cases = 41
Chi square = 23.45211, df = 8, significance = 0.0092
Cramer's V = 0.10872

Realising that most full time students are considerably younger than their part time equivalents, analysis by age group seemed appropriate to verify the tendency noted above, that mature students are likely to make more negative evaluations of academic libraries as suitable places for study than are younger students. As shown in Table 58, the pattern was reinforced even more strongly. Amongst the under-twenties, 78.8% agreed with the statement that the university or college library is a suitable place for study. In the 20 - 24 age group, this dropped dramatically to 59.0%; to 57.6% amongst the 25 - 29 year olds; 48.5% amongst those in their thirties; 49.1% for those in their forties; 22.2% for those in their fifties; and 100.0% for those in their sixties. Again, note the slightly discrepant figure for the 40 - 49 years age bracket; and the unreliability of percentages for the fifties and sixties age groups, as there are so few cases involved. One can surmise what the reasons are for the observed

phenomenon. Possibly younger students have a greater tolerance for noise and distractions than do older students, who are more inclined to find concentration difficult in academic libraries. Or perhaps older students have more access to quiet study areas at home than do students still in their teens.

TABLE 58 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH STUDY AREA IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY AGE GROUP

AGE GROUP	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'I find my university / college library a suitable place for study'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
15 - 19 years	23.6	55.2	12.4	7.3	1.5	100.0	259
20 - 24 years	16.1	42.9	22.5	14.5	4.0	100.0	422
25 - 29 years	16.3	41.3	21.2	15.4	5.8	100.0	104
30 - 39 years	13.2	35.3	26.5	16.9	8.1	100.0	136
40 - 49 years	5.5	43.6	30.9	14.5	5.5	100.0	55
50 - 59 years	-	22.2	33.3	33.3	11.1	99.9	9
60 - 69 years	25.0	75.0	-	-	-	100.0	4

N = 989
Missing cases = 42
Chi square = 68.83756, df = 24, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.11787

The crosstabulation by level of course also followed a similar pattern, with undergraduates more likely to rate their academic libraries as suitable places for study than were postgraduates. Amongst undergraduates, 65.8% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the tertiary library was a good place to study, compared with only 44.2% of postgraduates. Each higher level of course produced a marked decrement in positive ratings: with undergraduate diploma respondents, 73.7% supported the statement; compared with 65.3% of undergraduate degree; 48.4% of postgraduate diploma; 42.6% of Masters; and 33.3% of doctoral students. Results were statistically significant. (Chi square = 53.61299, df = 20, Significance = 0.0007, Cramer's V = 0.10444).

There were no discernible differences in degree of satisfaction with library study areas by field of subject specialisation.

(f) 'If my university / college library does not have the title I need, library staff obtain it for me from another library.'

The very high incidence of undecided responses to this question (61.4%) suggests that availability or unavailability of interlibrary loans is not an issue with the majority of students. Judging from written comments, many appeared to be totally unaware of the existence of interlibrary loans services in academic libraries. However, of those who were familiar with the practice, there was an equal split between those who were satisfied and those who were dissatisfied with existing provisions (19.4% and 19.2% respectively). The relatively high incidence of negative responses, and particularly the greater number of 'strongly disagree' responses compared with earlier statements, shows that this is a bone of contention with a significant minority of students, and an issue which needs to be grappled with in academic libraries.

TABLE 59 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH PROVISION FOR INTERLIBRARY LOANS IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY

DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'If my university / college libray does not have the title I need, library staff obtain it for me from another library'*)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	37	3.8
Agree	154	15.6
Neutral / undecided	605	61.4
Disagree	125	12.7
`trongly disagree	64	6.5
TOTAL	985	100.0

Missing cases = 46

Results

The crosstabulation of degree of satisfaction with provision for interlibrary loans by educational institution failed to generate statistically significant results. However, the crosstabulation by mode of study (as set out in Table 60) was statistically significant. Part time students were more likely than were full timers to agree with the statement 'If my university or college library does not have the title I need, library staff obtain it for me from another library.' This may be attributable to the greater experience and awareness of library procedures by the [generally] more mature part time student; or to unconscious attitudinal differences manifested by library staff in their interactions with these students. 17.5% of full timers agreed with the statement, while 20.5% disagreed; compared with a 23.0% agreement rate, and a 16.2% disagreement rate amongst part time respondents.

TABLE 60 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH PROVISION FOR INTERLIBRARY LOANS IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'If my university / college library does not have the title I need, library staff obtain it for me from another library'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
Full time student	3.1	14.4	62.0	13.4	7.1	100.0	702
Part time student	4.9	18.1	60.8	11.3	4.9	100.0	265
External student	22.2	33.3	22.2	11.1	11.1	99.9	9

N = 976
Missing cases = 55
Chi square = 20.66573, df = 8, significance = 0.0235
Cramer's V = 0.10284

Reflecting policy restrictions on interlibrary lending for undergraduate students at many institutions, there was a strong trend for agreement with the statement that the academic library arranged for interlibrary loans to increase with each higher course level. Overall, 14.8% of undergraduates agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, compared with 41.5% of postgraduates. 13.2% of undergraduate diploma; 14.9% of undergraduate degree; 27.9% of

postgraduate diploma: 52.3% of Masters and 70.4% of doctoral respondents supported the statement, revealing a much more extensive use of interlending with higher degrees. Results were highly significant in statistical terms, and the two variables moderately correlated. Table 61 presents the results.

TABLE 61 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH PROVISION FOR INTERLIBRARY LOANS IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY LEVEL OF COURSE

LEVEL OF COURSE	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION INDICATED BY EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH THE STATEMENT: *'If my university / college library does not have the title I need, library staff obtain it for me from another library'*					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
Undergraduate degree	2.8	12.1	64.8	13.3	7.2	100.2	744
Undergraduate diploma	5.3	7.9	60.5	13.2	13.2	100.1	38
Postgraduate diploma	3.2	24.7	55.9	8.6	7.5	99.9	93
Masters	11.4	40.9	40.9	6.8	-	100.0	44
Doctorate	14.8	55.6	25.9	3.7	-	100.0	27
Other	4.8	4.8	57.1	33.3	-	100.0	21

N = 967
Missing cases = 64
Chi square = 108.86839, df = 20, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.14998

Results

With increasing age, there was a greater tendency for respondents to claim that library staff were prepared to arrange interlibrary loans for them (See Table 62), adding weight to the observations just made for mode of study. Only 10.3% of the under-twenties agreed that library staff arranged interlibrary loans, compared with 16.7% of those aged 20 -24; 31.5% of those 25 - 29; 29.4% of those in their thirties; and 30.4% of those in their forties. Also, with younger students, there was a much higher incidence of neutral responses, which suggests that many were unaware of interlibrary loans practices. 71.8% of those under 20 were undecided; compared with 60.4% of the 20 -24 age group; 50.5% of those 25 - 29; etc. Academic libraries could do more in the area of user education for new students, acquainting them with the wide range of resources, facilities and services available to them. Since the recent introduction by AACOBS of a $6 flat charge for each interlibrary loan in Australian libraries (which will go some way to redress the imbalance between libraries which are net lenders and net borrowers), it can be argued that, where the charge is passed on to the user, there is no valid reason for discriminating between users on the basis of borrower status in the provision of interlibrary loans, as many tertiary institutions have done in the past.

TABLE 62 : DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH PROVISION FOR INTERLIBRARY LOANS IN THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY BY AGE GROUP

AGE GROUP	OEGREE OF SATISFACTION (Indicated by extent of agreement with the statement: *'If my university / college library does not have the title I need, library staff obtain it for me from another library'*)					TOTAL	
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral / Undecided %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	%	No.
15 - 19 years	1.6	8.7	71.8	11.9	.0	100.0	252
20 - 24 years	2.4	14.3	60.4	14.3	8.6	100.0	419
25 - 29 years	4.8	26.7	50.5	14.3	3.8	100.1	105
30 - 39 years	6.8	22.6	58.6	7.5	4.5	100.0	133
40 - 49 years	14.5	16.4	54.5	10.9	3.6	99.9	55
50 - 59 years	-	33.3	22.2	33.3	11.1	99.9	9
60 - 69 years	33.3	-	33.3	33.3	-	99.9	3

N = 976
Missing cases = 55
Chi square = 95.74415, df = 24, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.14000

4.44 Awarenes and usage · ' reciprocal borrowing in university or college libraries

In Question 11, respondents were asked if they were aware of a system whereby they could borrow in person from other universities and colleges (the reciprocal borrowing scheme), and, if so, had they ever found material this way. Results revealed a reasonably high incidence of awareness of the scheme. Of 1,003 valid cases, 610 (60.8%) said they were aware of reciprocal boprrowing provisions; 393 (39.2%) were not. Of the respondents who were familiar with the scheme, one third had actualty used it to borrow materials from other academic libraries. (200, or 32.8%, had used it; and 410, or 67.2%, had not).

Crosstabulations revealed that **awareness** of reciprocal borrowing was greatest amongst college students (c.f. university students); part timers (c.f. full timers); postgraduates (c.f. undergraduates); older (c.f. younger) students; and students in latter years of their courses. However, **actual usage** of reciprocal borrowing by those who were aware of the scheme was not so clearly differentiated. While part time students also used reciprocal borrowing more than did full timers; postgraduates more than did undergraduates; and older students much more than younger ones; there were no discernible differences in reciprocal borrowing figures for the five tertiary institutions; or for year of co rse.

Table 63 demonstrates clearly that college students revealed a greater awareness of reciprocal borrowing than did university students, but that there were no such clear patterns in actual usage of reciprocal borrowing. 82.8% of students from Footscray I T; 78.4% from Swinburne I T; and 75.7% from Melbourne C A E said they were aware of the scheme; c.f. only 48.6% from the University of Melbourne and 47.2% from La Trobe University.

Melbourne C A E students had the highest incidence of usage - 44.4% of those who were aware of the scheme; followed closely by La Trobe University at 43.6%; Footscray I T at 30.0%; the University of Melbourne at 28.4%; and Swinburne I T with 25.2%.

TABLE 63 : AWARENESS AND USAGE OF RECIPROCAL BORROWING BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

INSTITUTION	AWARE OF RECIPROCAL BORROWING				USE RECIPROCAL BORROWING			
	YES %	NO %	TOTAL %	TOTAL NO.	YES %	NO %	TOTAL %	TOTAL NO.
University of Melbourne	48.6	51.4	100.0	418	28.4	71.6	100.0	211
La Trobe University	47.2	52.8	100.0	163	43.6	56.4	100.0	78
Melbourne C A E	75.7	24.3	100.0	107	44.4	55.6	100.0	81
Swinburne I T	78.4	21.6	100.0	162	25.2	74.8	100.0	127
Footscray I T	82.8	17.2	100.0	122	30.0	70.0	100.0	100

N = 972
Missing cases = 59
Chi square = 102.82488,
df = 30, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.18635

N = 597
Missing cases = 434
Chi ... = 14.65183
df = 5, significance = 0.0120
Cramer's V = 0.15549

Results

Part timers were much more likely both to be aware of, and to use, reciprocal borrowing, as shown in **Table 64**. Only 55.7% of full timers were aware of reciprocal borrowing; in comparison with 72.7% of part timers. While 29.1% of the full timers who were aware of reciprocal borrowing provisions actually used the scheme; 38.9% of the part time students did so.

TABLE 64 : AWARENESS AND USAGE OF RECIPROCAL BORROWING BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	AWARE OF RECIPROCAL BORROWING				USE RECIPROCAL BORROWING			
	YES %	NO %	TOTAL NO.	TOTAL %	YES %	NO %	TOTAL %	TOTAL NO.
Full time student	55.7	44.3	100.0	714	29.1	70.9	100.0	405
Part time student	72.7	27.3	100.0	271	38.9	61.1	100.0	198
External Student	100.0	-	100.0	10	20.0	80.0	100.0	10

N = 995
Missing cases = 36
Chi square = 31.43466,
df = 2, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.12549

N = 613
Missing cases = 418
Chi square = 6.48691
df = 2, significance = 0.0390
Cramer's V = 0.10287

In the analysis by level of course, undergraduates were much less likely than postgraduates to be aware of reciprocal borrowing provisions: 55.0% of undergraduates c.f. 88.6% of postgraduates. As well as having a greater awareness of reciprocal borrowing provisions, postgraduates were by far the greatest users of the scheme, with twice the usage rate of undergraduates: 50.0% of postgraduates who were familiar with the scheme, used it; compared with only 26.0% of undergraduates. With each higher course level, there was a noticeable increase in usage of reciprocal borrowing, as presented in **Table 65** on the next page.

TABLE 65 : AWARENESS AND USAGE OF RECIPROCAL BORROWING BY LEVEL OF COURSE

LEVEL OF COURSE	AWARE OF RECIPROCAL BORROWING				USE RECIPROCAL BORROWING			
	YES %	NO %	TOTAL %	TOTAL NO.	YES %	NO %	TOTAL %	TOTAL NO.
Undergraduate degree	54.2	45.8	100.0	758	26.1	73.9	100.0	417
Undergraduate diploma	70.0	30.0	100.0	40	24.1	75.9	100.0	29
Postgraduate diploma	89.2	10.8	100.0	93	39.5	60.5	100.0	81
Masters	91.5	8.5	100.0	47	58.1	41.9	100.0	43
Doctorate	81.5	18 5	100.0	27	70.8	29.2	100.0	24
Other	59.1	40.9	100.0	22	38.5	61.5	100.0	13

N = 987
Missing cases = 44
Chi square = 70.91017,
df = 5, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.18460

N = 607
Missing cases = 424
Chi square = 39.80163
df = 5, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.25607

Results

Both awareness and usage of reciprocal borrowing increased significantly with the age of the student, as demonstrated in Table 66. Only 39.7% of the under-twenties were aware of reciprocal borrowing, compared with 61.4% of those aged 20 - 24; 78.0% of those aged 25 - 29; 78.6% of those in their thirties; and 77.2% of those in their forties. A similar trend was evident with usage of reciprocal borrowing. 15.2% of the under-twenties who were aware of the scheme actually used it; while 27.0% of those aged 20 - 24; 40.5% of those aged 25 - 29; 45.0% of those in their thirties; and 50.0% of those in their forties; did so.

TABLE 66 : AWARENESS AND USAGE OF RECIPROCAL BORROWING BY AGE GROUP

AGE GROUP	AWARE OF RECIPROCAL BORROWING				USE RECIPROCAL BORROWING			
	YES %	NO %	TOTAL %	TOTAL NO.	YES %	NO %	TOTAL %	TOTAL NO.
15 - 19 years	39.7	60.3	100.0	257	15.2	84.8	100.0	105
20 - 24 years	61.4	38.6	100.0	427	27.0	73.0	100.0	263
25 - 29 years	78.0	22.0	100.0	100	40.5	59.5	100.0	79
30 - 39 years	78.6	21.4	100.0	140	45.0	55.0	100.0	111
40 - 49 years	78.6	21.4	100.0	56	50.0	50.0	100.0	46
50 - 59 years	66.7	33.3	100.0	9	66.7	33.3	100.0	6
60 - 69 years	100.0	-	100.0	4	50.0	50.0	100.0	4

N = 993
Missing cases = 38
Chi square = 99.33316.
df = 6, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.18233

N = 614
Missing cases = 417
Chi square = 38.47607
df = 6, significance = 0.0000
Cramer's V = 0.25033

Year of course had a slight impact on awareness of reciprocal borrowing, but none whatsoever on actual usage of the scheme. Students in fourth, fifth and sixth years revealed a much higher incidence of awareness (81.1%; 68.6%; and 85.7% respectively) than did those in the first three years of their courses (59.7%; 55.8%; and 57.0% respectively). However, the crosstabulation for usage of reciprocal borrowing by year of course showed no discernible trends at all, and was statistically non-significant (33.0% of first years who were aware of reciprocal borrowing provisions used the scheme; compared with 29.5% of second years; 35.3% of third years;; 30.1% of fourth years' 16.7% of fifth years; and 33.3% of sixth years).

4.5 USAGE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

In Section C of the questionnaire, respondents who used their local public libraries were asked a number of questions relating to that usage, and how public library services compared with services offered by their university or college libraries.

4.51 Public library membership

Question 12, the first question in this section of the questionnaire, asked if the student was a member of the local public library. As respondents were instructed to complete Section C only if they used their public libraries, it is likely that public library membership figures are slightly understated. That is, some of those who were registered with their local public libraries, but who very rarely used them and considered Section C inapplicable, may not have answered this question.

637 respondents, 61.8% of the total number of cases (1,031), said they were members of their local public libraries. As explained in Section 4.34, this figure is considerably higher than theState average. of 43.8%.

Respondents who replied early to the questionnaire had a slighity higher incidence of public library membership than those who replied late (after the mailing of the follow up letter). 62.5% of early respondents were members of their local public libraries, compared with 58.2% of late respondents.

Very few of the crosstabulations involving the variable 'public library membership' yielded statistically significant results. With educational institution, percentages of public library membership rates varied only marginally amongst the five institutions, with a range of 6.8%. La Trobe University students ranked as the highest, followed closely by Melbourne C A E, Footscray I T, the University of Melbourne, and Swinburne I T. In the crosstabulation by mode of study, full time students had a very slightly higher incidence of membership than did part timers, but with only 2.8% difference between the two figures. With age group, there was a range of 7.8%, but with little discernible pattern in the spread of figures. The only useful information to emerge from from the crosstabulation was that the under-twenties had a 4% higher rate of public library membership than the next highest ranking age group (those in their forties); the other six age groups had percentages within a range of 3.8%.

However, the crosstabulation by subject specialisation was statistically significant at the 0.01 level. There was a range of 18.2% amongst the nine subject areas. A summary ranking is given below:

Social sciences or humanities
Education
Management
Pure or applied sciences
Creative arts
Medical sciences
Business, commerce or economics
Engineering
Computing

Public library membership rates for the first seven subject areas in the summary rankings were close, within a range of 6.0%. Students specialising in engineering and computing, relatively speaking, had a much lower incidence of public library membership; with 11.4% separating engineering from business, commerce or economics; and 0.8% separating engineering from computing.

Little can be deduced from crosstabulations of public library membership by frequency of library usage for each type of library listed in Question 7 (See Section 4.3). There are no discernible trends whatsoever in the data, and results are statistically non-significant, except for the crosstabulation of public library membership by frequency of public library usage. Here there is clear evidence of increasing rates of public library membership with increasing

frequency of public library usage, as would be expected. It is interesting to note that 25 respondents (or 2.4% of the total of 1,031 cases), who claimed in Question 7 'never' to use their public libraries, were, in fact, public library members. This supports the point made in Section 4.34 that public library membership is an inadequate indicator of public library usage, with a small percentage of registered borrowers being non-users, and, conversely some non-members of a local public library using some of its resources and facilities, but not borrowing materials. This phenomenon explains the discrepancy between the figures of 65.7% of respondents who, in answer to Question 7(d) claimed to use their local public libraries at some time, and the 61.8% registered public library borrowers.

4.52 Major reasons for using public libraries

To ascertain students' major reasons for using public libraries, **Question 13** asked 'For what purposes do you use your local public library?' Respondents were able to tick more than one of the four options, which were: for course related or study needs; as a place to study; for general interest / information unrelated to study; and for recreational or leisure purposes.

Table 67 outlines frequencies data on respondents' main reasons for using public libraries. The 350 missing cases are those for whom Section C was inapplicable, as they did not use their public libraries.

TABLE 67 : MAJOR REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

REASON	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
(1) Course related / study needs (only)	81	11.9
(2) General interest / information unrelated to study (only)	88	12.9
(3) Recreation / leisure purposes (only)	69	10.1
(4) As a place to study (only)	11	1.6
(5) A combination of (1) to (4) above which includes course related/ study needs	311	45.7
(6) A combination of (1) to (4) above which excludes course related/ study needs	121	17.8
TOTAL	681	100.0

Missing cases = 350

Approximately six in ten respondents who used their public libraries did so, at least in part, for course related or study purposes; four in ten used them purely for recreational and / or general interest purposes only (59.2% c.f. 40.8%). These figures suggest that public libraries do play a significant part in the lives of many tertiary students. Section 4.55 explores further the extent to which public libraries are used for course related / study purposes, in terms of the proportion of library resources used for study emanating from public libraries.

Crosstabulating 'reasons for using public libraries' by a number of variables produced some interesting trends. In the crosstabulation by educational institution, the greatest usage of public libraries for study purposes tended to come from those who were least satisfied with their own university or college libraries; and, conversely, the lowest degree of usage for study purposes from those who were most satisfied with their own university or college libraries (See Section 4.43). This is most evident in the case of Swinburne I T, which recorded the highest degree of satisfaction with academic library services in most of the areas considered, and a significantly lower rate of usage of public libraries for study related purposes than the other four institutions. Results for the two universities; and for the other two colleges; were comparable, with the colleges recording a much higher incidence of usage of public libraries for course needs than the universities. However, as just explained, Swinburne was the exception, with a lower course related public library usage rate than the two universities.

The full table is reproduced as **Table 68 (a)**. As it stands, it narrowly misses the requirement of tests for statistical significance at the 0.05 level. Because the primary thrust of this research was to determine the extent of course related public library usage, as distinct from non-course related usage, a more useful presentation of the data comes from collapsing the three categories pertaining to course usage (i.e. 'Course and study needs (only)'; 'Place to study (only)'; and 'Combination including study'); and the three relating to non-course usage (i.e. 'General interest (only)'; 'Recreation and leisure (only)'; and 'Combination excluding study'), and presenting them in the form of a summary table, as is done in **Table 68 (b)** . When this is done, requirements of statistical significance are easily met, not only at the .05 level, but also at the .01 level. Swinburne I T, with a significantly lower incidence of public library usage for course related and study purposes, and a significantly higher incidence of public library usage for general interest and / or recreational purposes than the other four institutions, had an equal split between students who used their public libraries (at least in part) for course related purposes, and for totally non-course related purposes. The other two colleges had approximately three quarters of students whose usage of public libraries pertained in some way to course needs, and a quarter to non-course needs. The universities had a much lower incidence of students using public libraries for course needs, with 56.9% from La Trobe University, and 55.4% from the University of Melbourne.

TABLE 68 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

(a) Full Table

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY						TOTAL	
	Course & study needs (only) %	General interest (only) %	Recreation and leisure (only) %	Place to study (only) %	Combination including study %	Combination excluding study %	%	No.
University of Melbourne	11.2	11.9	12.3	1.1	43.1	20.4	100.0	269
La Trobe University	10.1	15.6	9.2	2.8	44.0	18.3	100.0	109
Melbourne C A E	11.5	6.9	9.2	2.3	57.5	12.6	100.0	87
Swinburne I T	10.0	19.1	10.9	0.9	40.0	19.1	100.0	110
Footscray I T	20.0	10.6	3.5	2.4	52.9	10.6	100.0	85

N = 660
Missing cases = 371
Chi square = 31.58308,
df = 25, significance = 0.1704
Cramer's V = 0.09724

(b) Summary Table

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY		TOTAL	
	For course related and study purposes %	For general interest and recreational purposes %	%	No.
University of Melbourne	55.4	44.6	100.0	269
La Trobe University	56.9	43.1	100.0	109
Melbourne C A E	71.3	28.7	100.0	87
Swinburne I T	50.9	49.1	100.0	110
Footscray I T	75.3	24.7	100.0	85

N = 660
Missing cases = 371
Chi square = 19.627,
df = 5, (This is significant at the 0.01 level - which requires a Chi square value of at least 15.09)

Analysing results by level of course revealed that undergraduates were much more likely than postgraduates to use public libraries for course related purposes: 62.2% of undergraduates who used their public libraries claimed to use them in part for reasons related to study, whereas only 45.8% of postgraduates did so. **Table 69 (a) Full table** and (b) **Summary table** clearly demonstrate successive decrements in usage of public libraries for course related purposes with increasing level of course, excepting for doctoral students, who used their public libraries for study purposes (amongst other reasons) marginally more than did Masters students.

TABLE 69 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY LEVEL OF COURSE

(a) Full Table

LEVEL OF COURSE	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY						TOTAL	
	Course & study needs (only) %	General interest (only) %	Recreation and leisure (only) %	Place to study (only) %	Combination including study %	Combination excluding study %	%	No.
Undergraduate diploma	18.9	2.7	5.4	-	64.9	8.1	100.0	37
Undergraduate degree	12.5	13.8	7.8	1.6	46.6	17.7	100.0	513
Postgraduate diploma	3.2	9.7	17.7	1.6	43.5	24.2	99.9	62
Masters	7.1	10.7	28.6	3.6	28.6	21.4	100.0	28
Doctorate	-	17.6	29.4	5.9	41.2	5.9	100.0	17
Other	33.3	16.7	-	-	33.3	16.7	100.0	12

N = 669
Missing cases = 362
Chi square = 55.43653,
df = 25, significance = 0.0004
Cramer's V = 0.12874

TABLE 69 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY LEVEL OF COURSE

(b) Summary Table

LEVEL OF COURSE	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY		TOTAL	
	For course related and study purposes %	For general interest and recreational purposes %	%	No.
Undergraduate diploma	83.8	16.2	100.0	37
Undergraduate degree	60.6	39.4	100.0	513
Postgraduate diploma	48.4	51.6	100.0	62
Masters	39.3	60.7	100.0	28
Doctorate	47.1	52.9	100.0	17

N = 657
Missing cases = 374

As presented in Table 70 (a) Full table and 70 (b) Summary table on the next page, full time students were more likely to use public libraries for course related and study purposes than were part time students (62.0% c.f. 53.3%), and less likely to use them solely for recreational and / or general interest purposes.

TABLE 70 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY MODE OF STUDY

(a) Full Table

MODE OF STUDY	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY						TOTAL	
	Course & study needs (only) %	General interest (only) %	Recreation and leisure (only) %	Place to study (only) %	Combin-ation including study %	Combin-ation excluding study %	%	No.
Full time student	14.4	12.7	9.4	1.2	46.4	15.8	99.9	487
Part time student	5.6	14.0	11.2	2.8	44.9	21.3	99.8	178
External student	-	-	11.1	-	44.4	44.4	99.9	9

N = 674
Missing cases = 357
Chi square = 19.45872,
df = 10, significance = 0.0348
Cramer's V = 0.12015

(b) Summary Table

MODE OF STUDY	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY		TOTAL	
	For course related and study purposes %	For general interest and recreational purposes %	%	No.
Full time student	62.0	37.9	99.9	487
Part time student	53.3	46.5	99.8	178
External student	44.4	55.5	99.9	9

N = 674

Missing cases = 357

Results

With year of course, each subsequent year brought about a significant decrement in course / study related public library usage, and a consequent increase in usage of public libraries for general interest and / or recreational purposes, as demonstrated in Table 71 (a) **Full table** and **(b) Summary table.** In first year, 65.5% of respondents used public libraries for course related purposes; in comparison with 59.7% for second years; 57.6% for third years; 40.8% for fourth years; 33.3% for fifth years; and none of the sixth years.

TABLE 71 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY YEAR OF COURSE

(a) Full Table

YEAR OF COURSE	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY						TOTAL	
	Course & study needs (only) %	General interest (only) %	Recreation and leisure (only) %	Place to study (only) %	Combination including study %	Combination excluding study %	%	No.
First year	15.8	8.8	10.7	1.5	48.2	15.1	100.1	272
Second year	13.2	12.1	8.0	1.1	45.4	20.1	99.9	174
Third year	7.3	17.9	7.9	2.0	48.3	16.6	100.0	151
Fourth year	5.6	20.4	16.7	3.7	31.5	22.2	100.1	54
Fifth year	-	26.7	13.3	-	33.3	26.7	100.0	15
Sixth year	-	-	25.0	-	-	75.0	100.0	4

N = 670
Missing cases = 361
Chi square = 44.65005,
df = 25, significance = 0.0092
Cramer's V = 0.11545

TABLE 71 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY YEAR OF COURSE

(b) Summary Table

YEAR OF COURSE	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY		TOTAL	
	For course related and study purposes %	For general interest and recreational purposes %	%	No.
First year	65.5	34.6	100.1	272
Second year	59.7	40.2	99.9	174
Third year	57.6	42.4	100.0	151
Fourth year	40.8	59.3	100.1	54
Fifth year	33.3	66.7	100.0	15
Sixth year	-	100.0	100.0	4

N = 670
Missing cases = 361

As with year of course, increasing age was associated with a significant decrement in usage of public libraries for course related and study purposes, and an increase in recreational purposes, as demonstrated in **Table 72 (a) Full table** and **(b) Summary table.** While 72.6% of the under-twenties used public libraries for course and study purposes; only 55.6% of those aged 20 -24 years; 54.5% of those 25 - 29 years; 50.0% of those in their thirties; 46.3% of those in their forties; and 42.9% of those in their fifties, did so. Numbers in the fifties and sixties age brackets are too few for reliable figures. Note the sharp fall in study related public library usage between the under 20 and 20 - 24 years age groups.

TABLE 72 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY AGE GROUP

(a) Full Table

AGE GROUP	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY						TOTAL	
	Course & study needs (only) %	General interest (only) %	Recreation and leisure (only) %	Place to study (only) %	Combination including study %	Combination excluding study %	%	No.
15 - 19 years	21.1	8.8	5.4	0.5	51.0	13.2	100.0	204
20 - 24 years	8.7	15.9	10.2	3.0	43.9	18.2	99.9	264
25 - 29 years	12.3	15.8	12.3	1.8	40.4	17.5	100.1	57
30 - 39 years	2.1	10.4	18.8	1.0	46.9	20.8	100.0	96
40 - 49 years	12.2	22.0	9.8	-	34.1	22.0	100.1	41
50 - 59 years	-	-	14.3	-	42.9	42.9	100.1	7
60 - 69 years	25.0	-	-	-	75.0	-	100.0	4

N = 673
Missing cases = 358
Chi square = 63.34646,
df = 30, significance = 0.0004
Cramer's V = 0.13720

TABLE 72 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY AGE GROUP

(b) Summary Table

AGE GROUP	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY		TOTAL	
	For course related and study purposes %	For general interest and recreational purposes %	%	No.
15 - 19 years	72.6	27.4	100.0	204
20 - 24 years	55.6	44.3	99.9	264
25 - 29 years	54.5	45.6	100.1	57
30 - 39 years	50.0	50.0	100.0	96
40 - 49 years	46.3	53.8	100.1	41
50 - 59 years	42.9	57.2	100.1	7
60 - 69 years	100.0	-	100.0	4

N = 673
Missing cases = 353

With subject specialisation, there was a clear pattern of greater usage of public libraries for course related and study purposes by those in the more literature based 'softer' sciences, and less usage by those in the 'hard' sciences and technological areas. Table 73 (a) provides summary data from the original table; while Table 73 (b) provides rankings of the data.

TABLE 73 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY SUBJECT SPECIALISATION

(a) Summary Table

SUBJECT AREA	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY		TOTAL	
	For course related and study purposes %	For general interest and recreational purposes %	%	No.
Pure or applied sciences	54.8	45.3	100.1	84
Medical sciences	44.0	56.0	100.0	50
Engineering	44.8	55.1	99.9	58
Computing	38.0	61.9	99.9	21
Social sciences or humanities	63.1	36.9	100.0	198
Creative arts	70.0	30.0	100.0	30
Education	72.6	27.3	99.9	73
Business, commerce or economics	62.1	37.9	100.0	103
Management	60.0	40.0	100.0	10
'Other' subject areas	66.0	34.1	100.1	44

N = 671
Missing cases = 360
Chi square = 23.6641,
df = 9, (This is statistically significant at the 0.01 level - which requires a Chi square value of at least 21.67)

TABLE 73 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY SUBJECT SPECIALISATION

(b) Summary rankings

(I) Rankings of subject areas on the basis of percentages of respondents using public libraries for course related / study purposes

SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
Education	72.6
Creative arts	70.0
Social sciences or humanities	63.1
Business, commerce or economics	62.1
Management	60.0
Pure or applied sciences	54.8
Engineering	44.8
Medical Sciences	44.0
Computing	38.0

(II) Rankings of subject areas on the basis of percentages of respondents using public libraries solely for general interest and / or recreational purposes

SUBJECT AREA	PERCENTAGE
Computing	61.9
Medical sciences	56.0
Engineering	55.1
Pure or applied sciences	45.3
Management	40.0
Business, commerce or economics	37.9
Social sciences or humanities	36.9
Creative arts	30.0
Education	27.3

Crosstabulating 'reasons for using the public library' by 'frequency of library usage' yielded some interesting insights into the nature of tertiary students' public library usage. No definite trends could be deduced from tables for 'Other university or college library'; 'Library at work place'; 'Council of Adult Education Library'; or 'Library of club, social group, church, etc.' In some of these tables, numbers of cases were too few for reliable statistical analysis. However, tables for 'The student's own university or college library'; 'State Library of Victoria'; and 'Local public library' did reveal meaningful trends. More frequent library usage of a student's own academic library; or the State Library of Victoria; or the local public library; was associated with a higher incidence of public library usage for course related and study purposes; and, conversely, less frequent usage of any of these libraries was associated with a higher incidence of public library usage for recreational and / or general interest purposes. Summary versions of the data are presented in **Tables 74, 75 and 76.**

Table 74 demonstrates clearly that respondents who used their own university or college libraries frequently were more likely to have a higher incidence of public library usage for course and study purposes, and a lower incidence of public library usage for recreational and general interest purposes; compared with those who used it less frequently, for whom the opposite was true.

TABLE 74 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE STUDENT'S OWN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARY

Summary Table

FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF OWN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARY	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY		TOTAL	
	For course related and study purposes %	For general interest and recreational purposes %	%	No.
Uses it 'rarely' or once or twice a year	33.3	66.7	100.0	15
Uses it once in two or three months	45.8	54.2	100.0	48
Uses it once or twice a month	48.0	52.0	100.0	100
Uses it about once a week	63.3	36.7	100.0	180
Uses it more than once a week	63.8	36.2	100.0	323

N = 666
Missing cases = 365
Chi square = 16.9849,
df = 4, (This is statistically significant at the 0.01 level - which requires a Chi square value of at least 13.28)

While Table 75 does not meet the requirements for tests of significance at the 0.05 level, the raw data for the State Library of Victoria does demonstrate a similar trend to that presented in Table 74 for respondents' own academic libraries. That is, with each increment in frequency of usage of the State Library of Victoria , there is an increase in the percentage of respondents nominating course related and study purposes as a reason for using their local public libraries, and an associated decrease in those who use public libraries solely for recreational and / or general interest purposes.

TABLE 75 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA

Summary Table

FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY		TOTAL	
	For course related and study purposes %	For general interest and recreational purposes %	%	No.
'Never' uses it	56.7	43.3	100.0	312
'Rarely' uses it	58.1	41.9	100.0	117
Uses it once or twice a year	63.9	36.1	100.0	97
Uses it once in two or three months	67.4	32.6	100.0	46
Uses it once or twice a month	70.0	30.0	100.0	30
Uses it weekly or more than weekly	81.3	18.8	100.1	16

N = 618
Missing cases = 413
Chi square = 7.492,
df = 5, (This misses out on being statistically significant at the 0.05 level - which requires a Chi square value of at least 11.07)

Similarly, Table 76 reveals that more frequent usage of public libraries is associated with a greater tendency to use the public library for course related and study purposes, and less frequent usage with a higher incidence of usage for recreational purposes and / or general interest only.

TABLE 76 : REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Summary Table

FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY	REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARY		TOTAL	
	For course related and study purposes %	For general interest and recreational purposes %	%	No.
'Rarely' uses it	43.5	56.5	100.0	92
Uses it once or twice a year	57.4	42.6	100.0	162
Uses it once in two or three months	58.9	41.1	100.0	163
Uses it once or twice a month	67.3	32.7	100.0	162
Uses it about once a week	72.7	27.3	100.0	44
Uses it more than weekly	100.0	-	100.0	14

N = 637
Missing cases = 394
Chi square = 26.9276,
df = 5, (This is statistically significant at the 0.01 level - which requires a Chi square value of at least 15.09)

4.53 Resources, services and facilities used in public libraries

In Question 14, respondents were asked to indicate which resources, services and facilities they used in their public libraries. The list provided was identical to that given in Question 9 (See Section 4.42) for students' own university or college libraries. The following histogram provides a visual representation of the data, while Table 77 gives the precise figures in ranked order.

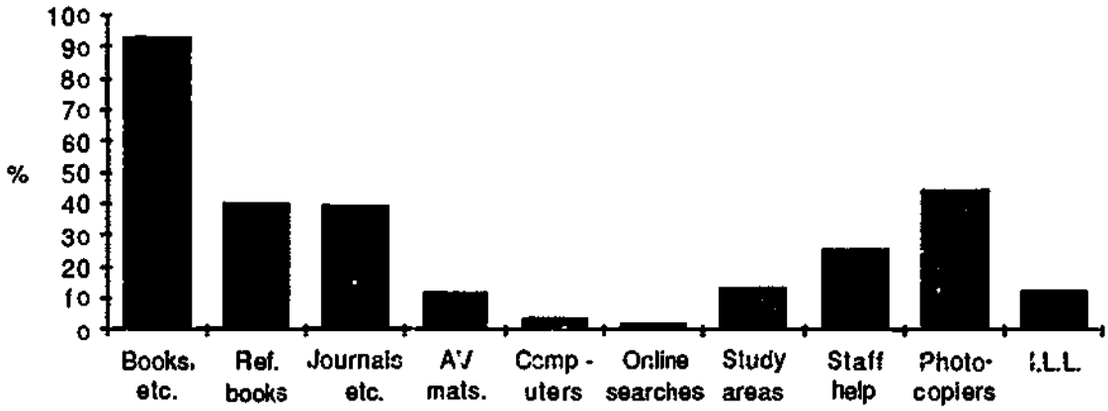


TABLE 77 : RESOURCES, SERVICES AND F ACILITIES USED IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RESOURCE, SERVICE OR FACILITY	USED BY RESPONDENT		NOT USED BY RESPONDENT		TOTAL		MISSING CASES
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Books and other materials for loan	632	92.7	50	7.3	682	100.0	349
Photocopiers	309	45.4	372	54.6	681	100.0	350
Reference books	273	40.0	409	60.0	682	100.0	349
Journals and newspapers	269	39.4	413	60.6	682	100.0	349
Library staff assistance	172	25.3	509	74.7	681	100.0	350
Study areas	94	13.8	587	86.2	681	100.0	350
Interlibrary loans	89	13.1	59.1	66.9	680	100.0	351
Audiovisual materials and equipment	81	11.9	600	88.1	681	100.0	350
Computers	25	3.7	656	96.3	681	100.0	350
Online searches	17	2.5	664	97.5	681	100.0	350

Results

The overall ranking of most used to least used services in public libraries is similar to the ranking of services in academic libraries. The only two differences are:

(1) 'Study areas' ranked third for academic libraries; and sixth for public libraries; and

(2) 'Interlibrary loans' ranked before 'Audiovisual materials and equipment' in public libraries, but after 'Audiovisual materials and equipment' in academic libraries. Table 78 presents the comparative rankings for both public libraries and university / college libraries.

TABLE 78 : COMPARATIVE RANKING OF RESOURCES, SERVICES AND FACILITIES USED IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND RESPONDENTS' OWN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RESOURCE, SERVICE OR FACILITY	PUBLIC LIBRARIES		UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES	
	Ranking	% using the service	Ranking	% using the service
Books and other materials for loan	1	92.7	1	96.9
Photocopiers	2	45.4	2	88.7
Reference books	3	40.0	4	71.4
Journals and newspapers	4	39.4	5	69.6
Library staff assistance	5	25.3	6	47.4
Study areas	6	13.8	3	72.2
Interlibrary loans	7	13.1	8	20.4
Audiovisual materials and equipment	8	11.9	7	31.9
Computers	9	3.7	9	19.8
Online searches	10	2.5	10	14.0

In this data, the widespread public conception of public libraries as purveyors of books for loan is strongly reinforced, with almost twice as many respondents mentioning using 'Books and other materials for loan' as any other service. The other striking feature of the table is the significantly lower rate of usage of all other public library services compared with their academic library counterparts. Percentages of respondents using 'Reference books'; 'Journals and newspapers', and 'Assistance from library staff' are only marginally over half the figures for academic libraries. 'Interlibrary loans' fares a little better, with almost two thirds of the percentage for academic libraries. 'Audiovisual materials and equipment' is just over one third; while 'Study areas', 'Computers', and 'Online searches', are each less than one fifth of the equivalent figures for university and college libraries.

Of course, much of this discrepancy can be explained in terms of the relative magnitude and levels of resourcing of the two sets of operations. Several of the services listed are non-existent, or operating on a very limited and modest scale in most public libraries. Photocopying services are, naturally, much more extensive in academic libraries, with multiple machines available, but also are usually cheaper than those in public libraries. As one respondent commented: '*It costs me twice as much to photocopy at my public library as it does at Uni.*' Reference, journal and newspaper collections are quite limited in most public libraries, and with a bias towards recreational and general interest materials and basic sources, rather than more serious or scholarly works needed in an academic course. In public libraries, audiovisual collections are commonly restricted to small collections of posters, records, audiocassettes, and sometimes videocassettes, again with an emphasis on recreational materials of little value for study purposes. Public access computers and online searching services are the exception rather than the rule. Generally, study areas are restricted, due to space constraints.

Despite severe resource constraints, public libraries are obviously managing to provide valuable interlibrary loans services, which were used by one in eight respondents, in this way supplementing limited local collections, and facilitating student access to a much wider materials base. Nevertheless, it is worth stressing that interlibrary loans are used by only a small minority of students; and that the provision of interlibrary loans by public libraries was the least often cited reason given by respondents for using public libraries for course and study needs (See Section 4.54).

The figure for usage of library staff assistance is very low, with only one in four students claiming they called on staff help in public libraries, compared with approximately one in two students in academic libraries. One can only surmise why this is so. Either respondents generally do not need help; or they are reticent to ask for it. Perhaps public libraries systems are easier to use and more self-explanatory than their academic library equivalents. Possibly most tertiary students are proficient , self-directed and self-sufficient library users and rarely find themselves in a position to need assistance from library staff. Maybe public libraries are severely understaffed, with librarians appearing busy, rushed or preoccupied; or long queues forming at the reference desk. Certainly, there is scope for an expansion of user education and public relations programs in public libraries.

Seventeen respondents indicated that they used public library services other than the ten listed. Four of these failed to specify what the 'other' services were. Five said they used children's collections or services - a couple of these were Education students; the others may have been studying children's literature, or merely borrowing materials for their own children. Several 'other' responses should have been coded using the existing categories. Three mentioned collections of records, tapes and cassettes; one using magazines; and one reading novels. A bookmobile; a community service noticeboard; and art displays were each cited once.

In crosstabulations of particular services by field of subject specialisation, few meaningful trends were discernible. Education students were more likely to use audiovisual collections than any other group (20.0% for education students, c.f. 14.3% for computing;13.3% for creative arts; 12.1% for social sciences or humanities; 10.5% for engineering; etc.) Predictably, computing students used computers in public libraries to a much greater extent than any other group (19.0% for computing students c.f. 4.5% for social sciences or humanities; 3.6% for pure or applied sciences; 3.5% for engineering; etc.). Computing

students were the least likely to call on staff assistance in public libraries (4.8%); followed by 14.0% for medical sciences and engineering students; 21.6% for business and economics; 27.3% for management; 30.0% for creative arts; 30.7% for education; and 33.8% for social sciences and humanities. Again, here the pattern was for those in scientific and technical areas to be less likely to use library staff assistance than were those in the 'soft' sciences.

A similar trend was evident in the use of interlibrary loans: with 6.0% of those in the medical sciences; 7.0% in engineering; 9.5% in computing; and 12.0% in the pure or applied sciences using the service; compared with 21.3% of education students; 17.2% of social sciences and humanities students, etc.

'Reasons for using the public library ' affected to some extent the types of services used in public libraries. 74.4% of those who used reference books, used their public libraries for course related and study purposes, the other 25.6% of respondents using public libraries solely for recreational and / or general interest purposes. Of those using study areas, 79.8% used public libraries for course and study purposes, and 20.2% for recreation and general interest. Photocopying facilities and interlibrary loans were also used more by those using public libraries for study reasons than by those using them for solely for recreation and / or general interest purposes - 70.0% and 30.0% respectively for photocopying facilities; and 71.9% and 28.1% for interlibrary loans. Most of the other services roughly approximated the distribution described in Section 4.52 of 60.0% of students who used public libraries using them for course and study purposes; and 40.0% for recreation and general interest.

4.54 Reasons for using public libraries for course related and study purposes

One of the objectives of the research was to determine why students who used public libraries for course related and study purposes did so. Question 15 asked students who used their public libraries for study needs if this was because:

(1) Material owned by the academic library was unavailable.

(2) The academic library did not own the material needed.

(3) The loans period in the academic library was too short.

(4) The public library had resources lacking in the academic library.

(5) The public library arranged interlibrary loans.

(6) The public library was easier to use than the academic library.

(7) The academic library was crowded and lacked study space.

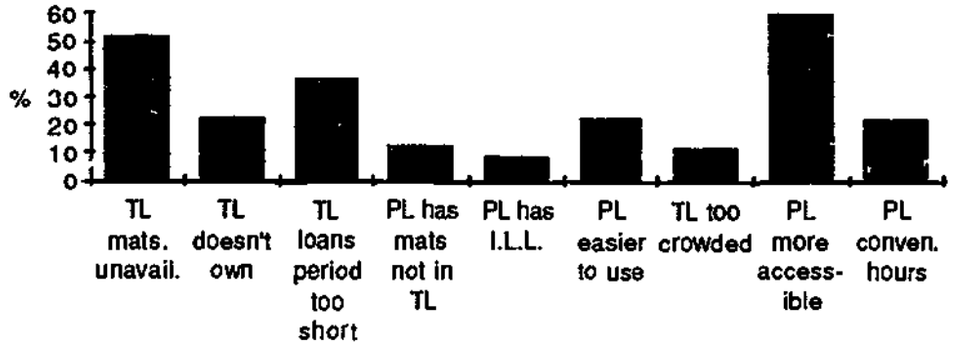
(8) The public library was accessible, closer to home.

(9) The public library had convenient hours of opening.

An 'Other (Please specify) ' option was also provided.

The following histogram displays in visual format frequencies data on reasons for students using public libraries for course related and study purposes. For most of the categories, the number of cases involved is 426. Missing cases represent either those who did not use their public libraries, or those who used public libraries, but not for study purposes. There is a slight discrepancy between the base figure of 426, and the 403 respondents who claimed in Question 13 to use their public libraries for course and study purposes (see Section 4.52). Subsequent crosstabulation by 'frequency of use of the public libraries' revealed that around 25 of those who had ticked 'I never use my local public library ' then proceeded to fill out Part III of the questionnaire on usage of public libraries. This is undoubtedly the reason for this

discrepancy. Although these respondents are likely to have skewed the data slightly, as they comprise just under 6.0% of total cases, it does not appear to be a major problem. Percentages given in the histogram represent the proportion of the 426 students who ticked the option. Note the abbreviation 'TL' in the histogram stands for 'Tertiary Library ' and 'PL' for 'Public Library '.



Based on this data, the most to least often cited reasons for using public libraries for course related and study purposes were as given in Table 79.

As clearly portrayed in the relative rankings, the major reasons for using public libraries for study purposes were convenience and proximity of the public library; an attempt to track down specific items owned by the academic library but unavailable when needed, or suitable substitutes for recommended titles; and an attempt to procure materials on an extended loan of a few weeks rather than the short term loans available in their academic libraries (e.g. overnight; a few days; one week). Subsequent comments by respondents revealed that students had a very clear idea of the relative roles of their academic and public libraries. They expected their academic libraries to provide their primary study materials, and realised that public libraries aiming to serve the general public lacked the resources to cater adequately for students' needs in a vast number of different areas and at varying levels of specialisation. Respondents' use of public libraries for course related purposes was very much as a secondary or supplementary source. Although expectations of filling specific needs were not high, students were satisfied when they were able to procure required titles, or suitable substitutes, and to have the convenience of longer loans periods.

Middle ranking reasons for using public libraries for course related purposes were: an attempt to locate materials not listed in the academic library 's catalogue; and ease of use and convenient opening hours of the public library. While students realised their low chances of finding in the public library items not owned by their university or college library, some did check for such titles. Obviously, convenience of opening hours varied greatly from one public library to another. Although a significant minority cited this as a reason for using the public libraries, many others, especially part time students who were working full time, complained in the 'Other comments' section that they could never get to the public library as it was not open in the evenings or on weekends.

The least important reasons given were that the public library had resources lacking in the academic library; the academic library was too crowded; and the public library arranged interlibrary loans. Although each of these was important to some students, those reasons accounted for minimal public library usage overall. Few of the resource impoverished public libraries were in a position to compete with the resources of the large academic libraries.

TABLE 79 : RANKING OF REASONS FOR USING PUBLIC LIBRARIES FOR COURSE RELATED / STUDY PURPOSES

REASON	% CITING THE REASON	NO. CITING THE REASON	NO. OF RESPONDENTS ANSWERING THE QUESTION	MISSING CASES
1 Public library more accessible, closer to home	59.9	255	426	605
2 Material owned by university / college library was unavailable	52.2	224	429	602
3 Loans period too short in university / college library	36.4	155	426	605
=4 University / college library did not own the material needed	22.5	96	426	605
=4 Public library is easier to use than university / college library	22.5	96	426	605
6 Public library has convenient hours of opening	22.3	95	426	605
7 Public library has resources lacking in university / college library	12.9	55	426	605
8 University / college library too crowded	12.0	51	426	605
9 Public library arranges interlibrary loans	9.2	39	426	605
10 'Other' reasons	10.6	45	425	606

Nevertheless, there were some areas in which they had valuable collections, e.g. foreign language materials for migrants, which were of considerable value to some language students. Overcrowded academic libraries certainly posed a problem with a significant minority of students (17.5%) (See Section 4.43 (e)). However, only a few of the public libraries appeared to provide a suitable alternative in terms of adequate accommodation for private study. As outlined in Section 4.53, only 13.8% of students who used public libraries utilised their study areas. A similar percentage here (12.0%) was attracted to public libraries because of inadequate study facilities in their own academic libraries. Interlibrary loans were important to some students, but again only to a small minority, with less than 10.0% citing it as a reason for using public libraries for study purposes. Certainly it was not a primary reason for public library usage by tertiary students.

An analysis of 'Other reasons' for using public libraries for course related and study purposes provided further insights into some of the reasons just given. A total of 45 students made other comments. The majority focused on the value of the public library as a useful supplementary / alternative source of study materials. The following comments are illustrative:

'Use it as an alternative source.'

'Use it as a second reference.'

'The local library has a good range and I can often pick up extra useful material.'

'To supplement information obtained at college library.'

'As a check for additional references.'

'Can locate new sources.'

'May find extra / unusual study material.'

'Just another resource centre.'

'I look in my local library for books which are popular at a specified time at Uni., and thus difficult to get out on loan, although on Reserve. Sometimes my local library will have these books, or other books related to the topic, i.e. I use my local library where demand for books on a certain topic is excessive at Uni.'

'Books are often out on loan at University.'

'Books on Reserve at my college are available for loan from the public library.'

In their attempts to track down relevant materials at their public libraries , students were often not successful, as the following comments suggest:

'Different material, supplements other material, but usually too simple and not very relevant to me.'

'I have just tried to gain further information for essays, etc., but was very unsuccessful.'

'The public library has material supplementary to my area of study, but not vital to it.'

Many of the 'Other comments' related to the accessibility and convenience of using a library closer to home. In particular, many students utilised facilities of their local public libraries when away from university, e.g. at weekends or during vacations, when needing resources to work on for an assignment. Some students living in University residential colleges used their public libraries on visits home to the country. Some examples:

'When at home, it's difficult to have access to Uni. libraries.'

Results

'When working on an assignment over the holidays I go to the local library as it's far more convenient.'

'Use public library in holidays when not at Uni.

' Use local library when I'm home on weekends for convenience.'

'Library hours at Uni. too short, especially on weekends.'

'Closer to home.'

'Only use public library when at home in the country.'

'More accessible, especially for photocopying.'

A number of comments related to particular resources, services and facilities offered by the local public library, e.g.:

'Recent journals not available for loan at Uni., but some are available locally, e.g. ***Scientific American'.***

' Private study room available.'

'The local public library has a lot of books for migrants (languages).'

Some accolades went to public library staff, e g.:

'Approachable staff.'

'Public library staff always friendly and helpful.'

A few students had less tangible reasons for using the public library for study purposes:

'It's good to get away from University.'

'I enjoy a change of surroundings.'

'A much nicer environment.'

Additional data on each of the reasons for using public libraries for course related and study purposes follows. In the main, this has been derived from crosstabulations. For the sake of brevity, verbal summaries are given here rather than the full tables.

(a) 'Material owned by the academic library is unavailable, not on the shelves.'

This was a pervasive problem for students from all institutions. Percentages of respondents who cited this as a reason for using public libraries were reasonably close for all institutions, and differences not statistically significant. La Trobe University students reported the lowest incidence of the problem, at 43.9%; the next lowest was the University of Melbourne at 50.0%; then, Melbourne C A E with 54.4%; Footscray I T with 57.6%; and Swinburne I T with 58.5%. As would be expected, given their relative size and levels of resourcing, colleges ranked higher here than did the universities.

Proportionately more part timers than full timers claimed to experience difficulties in locating required items on the shelves in their academic libraries - 65.3% for part timers, compared with 49.1% for full timers. This is a significant difference in statistical terms (Chi square = 10.07846, df = 2, Significance = 0.0065, Cramer's V = 0.15436). With many part timers

accessing academic library collections only 'after hours', it is to be expected that full timers often will have removed recommended titles before part timers can reach the shelves.

Analysing results by level of course revealed that higher degree students were much less likely to cite this as a reason for using public libraries for course related purposes than were other students. Only 25.0% of doctoral students; and 36.4% of Masters students ticked this option. The problem was greatest amongst postgraduate diploma students, at 78.6%, followed by undergraduate degree students, 52.1%; and undergraduate diploma students, 45.5%. Results were statistically significant, with a moderate level of correlation. (Chi square = 12.60108, df = 5, Significance = 0.0274, Cramer's V = 0.17383).

Although crosstabulations by year of course and age group failed to yield any meaningful data or results which were statistically significant, the crosstabulation by field of subject specialisation was significant. (Chi square = 27.27972, df = 9, Significance = 0.0013, Cramer's V = 0.25395). It showed that fewer students in scientific and technical fields complained of unavailability of library materials than did students from other areas. Business, commerce or economics respondents reported the highest incidence of materials unavailability, at 62.1%; followed closely by the social sciences or humanities, 60.9%; management, 60.0%; and education at 56.4%. Creative arts was a little lower - 50.0%. Computing also came in at 50.0%; followed by medical sciences at 45.5%. Figures for pure or applied science and engineering were significantly lower - 33.3% and 18.5% respectively.

(b) The academic library does not own the material needed.

As one would expect, this was less of a problem in the larger and better endowed university libraries than in the colleges. 15.8% of La Trobe University respondents; and 17.3% of those from the University of Melbourne mentioned this as a reason for using public libraries; compared with 22.7% from Footscray I T; 24.6% from Melbourne C A E; and 39.1% from Swinburne I T. Results were statistically significant. (Chi square = 16.18085, df = 5, Significance = 0.0063, Cramer's V = 0.19698).

Part time respondents were marginally more likely to report this problem than were full timers (26.5% c.f. 22.1). However, results failed to yield the required level of statistical significance. Crosstabulations by level of course; year of course; age group; and field of subject specialisation failed to generate any discernible patterns, and were non-significant in statistical terms.

(c) The loans period in the academic library is too short

With varying loans periods from institution to institution, it was anticipated that this would be more of a concern in some institutions than others. Respondents from the University of Melbourne reported the highest incidence of this problem, with 48.0% citing it as a reason for using public libraries. Footscray I T followed with 37.9%; and La Trobe University with 34.2%. Melbourne C A E and Swinburne I T respondents were much less likely to regard this as an issue, with only 24.6% and 20.3% respectively, ticking the option. Results were statistically significant (Chi square = 19.85123, df = 5, Significance =0.0013, Cramer's V = 0.21819).

Although part timers reported a slightly higher incidence of this problem than did full timers (39.8% c.f. 35.6%), the percentages are close, and the difference not statistically significant. No definite trends were evident in the crosstabulations by level of course; year of course; age group; or field of subject specialisation.

(d) The public library has resources lacking in the academic library

As mentioned earlier, this was one of the least cited reasons for using public libraries for course related and study purposes. Although percentages were low for all institutions, there are some noticeable differences between them. Only 7.9% of respondents from La Trobe

University; 9.1% from Footscray I T; and 9.3% from the University of Melbourne claimed that their public libraries had resources lacking in their academic libraries. However, 17.5% of Melbourne C A E respondents; and 21.9% from Swinburne I T gave this as a reason for using public libraries. These differences are statistically significant. (Chi square = 23.94426, df = 5, Significance =0.0002, Cramer's V = 0.23963).

No significant differences were revealed between part timers' and full timers' responses to this question. Neither did any of the other crosstabulations reveal any meaningful results.

(e) The public library arranges interlibrary loans

This was the least mentioned reason for using public libraries for course related and study purposes. For each of the five institutions, percentages of respondents ticking the option were low, and quite close, failing to reveal any statistically significant differences. The University of Melbourne had the lowest incidence of respondents giving this as a reason for using public libraries, with 6.0%. Percentages for Footscray I T; La Trobe University; and Swinburne I T were almost identical (9.1%; 9.2%; and 9.4% respectively). Melbourne C A E reported the highest incidence, with 15.8%.

While more full timers than part timers checked this option (9.1% c.f. 7.1%), the percentages were too close to reveal any significant differences. The same applied to the crosstabulation by year of course. However, the crosstabulation by age group did yield results which reached the designated level of significance. ((Chi square = 13.96239, df = 6, Significance =0.0301, Cramer's V = 0.18233). Slightly fewer of the younger students than the older students cited this as a reason for using the public library for study purposes. 7.9% of the under-twenties ticked this option; c.f. 8.6% of those in their twenties; 10.9% of those in their thirties; and 10.0% of those in their forties. The crosstabulation by level of course did not reach the required level of statistical significance (Significance = 0.2570). However, it was interesting to observe in the raw data that no higher degree students gave this as a reason for using public libraries for course related purposes; while 14.3% of those studying for a postgraduate diploma; 8.3% for an undergraduate degree; and 15.6% for an undergraduate diploma did so.

Although results of the crosstabulation by field of subject specialisation were not significant statistically, a noticeably higher percentage of students from the social sciences or humanities than those from any other subject field ticked this option (13.0% c.f. 9.1% for creative arts; education; and business, commerce or economics; 7.8% for the pure or applied sciences; 7.4% for engineering; 4.8% for medical sciences; and 0.0% for both computing and management).

(f) The public library is easier to use than the academic library

A little less than one quarter of respondents gave this as a reason for using public libraries. Percentages for four of the five institutions were very close: with 27.3% of respondents from Footscray I T; 26.7% from the University of Melbourne; 21.1% from Melbourne C A E; and 19.7% from La Trobe University ticking the option. However, the figure from Swinburne I T was atypically low - 7.8%: which infers that more Swinburne students find their college library easy to use than do students from other institutions. This reinforces the observation made in Section 4.43 (b) that Swinburne students were much more satisfied with their user education than were students from other institutions. Results here were statistically significant at the 0.05 level. (Chi square = 12.53782, df = 5, Significance =0.0281, Cramer's V = 0.17340).

More part timers than full timers claimed that public libraries were easier to use than their academic libraries (27.6% c.f. 19.6%). Results were statistically significant (Chi square = 12.59934, df = 2, Significance =0.0018, Cramer's V = 0.17320). While reasons for this difference are not readily apparent, one can surmise that full time students may be better catered for in user education programs in tertiary institutions' libraries than are part timers. No other definite patterns were evident in data for other crosstabulations.

(g) The academic library is too crowded and lacks study space

Overall, only 12.0% of respondents cited this as a reason for using public libraries. However, figures varied significantly from one institution to another, highlighting accommodation problems in certain libraries. From the data, the colleges appear to have greater accommodation problems than the universities; with higher proportions of respondents mentioning crowded conditions in their academic libraries as a reason for using study facilities in their public libraries. Footscray I T appears to be by far the worst off, as 37.9% of respondents identified lack of study space as a major cause for concern. The next ranking figure was Swinburne I T, with 10.9%; followed closely by Melbourne C A E at 10.5%. Percentages for the two universities were markedly lower, with 5.3% for La Trobe University; and 4.0% for the University of Melbourne, suggesting a much higher satisfaction rate with the physical environment in these libraries. These rankings strongly reinforce the findings outlined in Section 4.43 (e) over students' reactions to the statement 'I find my university / college library a suitable place for study.' Results here were highly significant statistically. (Chi square = 59.91090, df = 5, Significance =0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.37904).

Full timers were slightly more likely than were part timers to nominate this as a reason for using public library study facilities (13.6% c.f. 6.1%), which is to be expected, as full timers have greater opportunities to utilise study facilities in libraries. However, results did not quite reach the required level of statistical significance. Other variables - level of course; year of course; age group; and field of subject specialisation had no effect on tendency to tick this option.

(h) The public library is more accessible, closer to home

As seen earlier, this was the most frequently cited reason for using public libraries for course related and study purposes. Proportions of respondents ticking this option did not vary greatly across the five institutions; and failed to yield any statistically significant differences. 50.0% of respondents from La Trobe University and Swinburne I T; 63.2% from Melbourne C A E; 64.0% from the University of Melbourne; and 65.7% from Footscray I T reported using the public library because of its physical proximity.

Results for the crosstabulation by level of course were statistically significant (Chi square = 18.32971, df = 5, Significance =0.0070), and showed that doctoral students were much more likely to cite this as a reason for using the public library for study purposes than were other students: percentages were 75.0% of doctoral students; c.f. 51.8% of Masters; 60.7% of postgraduate diploma; 58.0% of undergraduate degree; and 60.6% of undergraduate diploma students. As public libraries are likely to be of very limited use for studies at a higher degree level, it would appear that where such usage is reported, it would tend to be when students are studying at home and need additional resources urgently, wishing to obviate the need for a trip to the university or college library.

No statistically significant differences were revealed in crosstabulations for other variables.

(i) The public library has more convenient hours of opening

Just under one in four respondents gave this as a reason for using their public libraries. Across the five institutions, percentages citing the option did not vary greatly, and, with a significance level of 0.0914, failed to reach the specified 0.05 level of statistical significance. Melbourne C A E respondents mentioned this reason most frequently - 28.1%; followed by those from the University of Melbourne at 22.0%; Swinburne I T at 21.9%; La Trobe University at 18.4%; and Footscray I T at 16.7%.

Convenient public library opening hours were, naturally, of greater importance to part time students than to full time students (32.7% c.f. 18.9%) - a difference which is statistically significant. (Chi square = 8.19377, df = 2, Significance =0.0166, Cramer's V = 0.13967). With level of course, 20.1% of undergraduates cited this as a reason for using the public library for study purposes, c.f. 34.0% of the postgraduates. This general trend is supported in the crosstabulation by age group, which shows clearly that, with increasing age, convenient hours of opening assume greater importance to students. While only 18.4% of those under

twenty, and 19.9% of those in their twenties, gave this as a reason for using public libraries; 29.1% of those in their thirties; 35.0% in their forties; 100.0% in their fifties; and 75.0% in their sixties did so. (However, note that only three cases were involved in each of the last two categories). These results showed differences which were statistically significant. (Chi square = 27.21469, df = 6, Significance =0.0001, Cramer's V = 0.25455). This trend of greater value being placed on convenience of opening hours with increasing age, may be attributable to the greater complexity of life and increases in life demands brought about in the process of maturation. Other crosstabulations did not reveal any meaningful trends.

4.55 Proportion of library resources used for study coming from public libraries

To determine tertiary students' relative degree of reliance on public libraries for their study needs, respondents were asked in **Question 16** to estimate roughly what proportion of library resources they used for study came from the local public library. Five options were given:

Less than 10%
10% - 24%
25% - 49%
50% - 74%
75% - 100%

Unfortunately, there appears to have been some confusion over who should complete the question. It was intended as a follow on from Question 15 on reasons for using public libraries for course related purposes, to be filled in only by those who used their public libraries for study purposes. With hindsight, instructions given were not sufficiently explicit. According to Question13, 403 students used their public libraries for course related purposes. However, 599 students answered this question, a discrepancy of 196 respondents who did **not** use their public libraries for study purposes. As there was no 0% category provided, such respondents ticked the 'Less than 10%' option'. 445 students said they used public libraries for less than 10% of the library resources they used for study. Because of this misunderstanding, a revised frequencies table has been drawn up - **Table 80 (a)** . This Table uses the base figure of 403 (from Question 13), a more accurate figure than the original total of 599. The 196 respondents who did not use public libraries at all for study purposes have thus been weeded out of the 'Less than 10% category ', leaving 249 cases rather than 445. The original data is presented in **Table 80 (b)**.

As can be seen in **Table 80 (a)**, the vast majority of students who used public libraries for course related purposes made only limited use of public library resources for study. 86.4% of these respondents drew on public libraries for less than one quarter of the library resources they used for study; and 61.8% estimated that less than 10% came from the public library. A very small number of students used public libraries more extensively. 34 respondents (8.4%) claimed to use public libraries for between a quarter and a half of their library based study resources; 18 (4.5%) said they used public libraries for between half and three quarters; and three (0.7%) for more than three quarters of their study needs.

TABLE 80 : PROPORTION OF RESOURCES USED FOR STUDY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

(a) Revised Table

PROPORTION OF RESOURCES USED FOR STUDY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARY	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER.
Less than 10%	61.8	249
10%- 24%	24.6	99
25 %- 49%	8.4	34
50 %- 74%	4.5	18
75 %- 100%	0.7	3

N = 403 Missing cases = 628

Table 80 (b) Original Table

PROPORTION OF RESOURCES USED FOR STUDY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARY	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER.
Less than 10%	74.3	445
10% - 24%	16.5	99
25 %- 49%	5.7	34
50%- 74%	3.0	18
75 %- 100%	0.5	3

N = 599 Missing cases = 432

Results

Several crosstabulation tables for 'proportion of library resources used for study from public libraries' are of some interest, but unfortunately were affected by the data collection problems described earlier. As the original crosstabulations are based on the 599 cases, which involve approximately a 44% overestimation of cases in the 'Less than 10%' category, 44% of cases have been deducted from all the cells for that category in each of the following tables. While there are some problems inherent in this strategy of averaging out the differences and subtracting a constant proportion from each category, it was felt that this would provide a more accurate indicator of overall proportions than by reproducing the original tables. It is worth stressing that only the numbers in the 'Less than 10%' category have been modified. All other values are given as they appeared in the original tables. This data is included only as a preliminary indicator of possible trends. Further research is essential before any strong case can be argued on these points. While each of the original crosstabulations reached the specified 0.05 significance level, new figures have not been calculated for the revised tables, due to the suspect nature of some of the figures in the 'Less than 10%' category.

In the revised crosstabulation by educational institution, it appears that students from Melbourne C A E and Footscray I T make much heavier use of public libraries for study purposes than those from the other three institutions, for which figures are relatively close. This data is consistent with that gathered for Question 7 (d) 'Frequency of usage of public libraries by educational institution '(described in Section 4.34).

TABLE 81 : PROPORTION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES USED FOR STUDY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

Revised Table

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION	PROPORTION OF RESOURCES USED FOR STUDY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARY					TOTAL	
	Less than 10%	10 %- 24%	25 %- 49%	50% - 74%	75 %- 100%	%	No.
University of Melbourne	73.0	22.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	100.1	137
La Trobe University	66.7	19.7	6.1	6.1	1.5	100.1	66
Melbourne C A E	46.4	32.1	10.7	10.7	-	99.9	56
Swinburne I T	69.4	27.4	1.6	1.6	-	100.0	62
Footscray I T	49.2	27.1	15.3	8.5	-	100.1	59

N = 380 Missing cases = 651

The crosstabulation by level of course narrowly missed reaching the 0.05 level of statistical significance (Significance = 0.0691). However, the raw data showed a trend for undergraduates to use greater proportions of public library resources for study purposes than did postgraduates. 40.6% of undergraduates procured more than 10% of the library resources they used for study from the public library; compared with 23.5% of postgraduates. No discernible trends were evident in the crosstabulations by mode of study or age group.

However, a variable which showed a strong correlation was that by year of course. With each additional year of course, there was a definite decrease in the proportions of library resources used for study coming from public libraries. The revised crosstabulation table is presented as **Table 82**. In first year, 21.8% of respondents procured more than a quarter of the library resources they used for study from the public library; compared with 12.9% in second year; 2.2% in third year; 7.4% in fourth year [but note that, due to the few cases involved, this represents only two respondents]; and none in fifth and sixth years.

TABLE 82 : PROPORTION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES USED FOR STUDY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY YEAR OF COURSE

Revised Table

YEAR OF COURSE	PROPORTION OF RESOURCES USED FOR STUDY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARY					TOTAL	
	Less than 10%	10 %- 24%	25% - 49%	50 %- 74%	75 %- 100%	%	No.
First year	53.5	24.7	13.5	7.7	0.6	100.0	170
Second year	63.4	23.8	7.9	3.0	2.0	100.1	101
Third year	68.5	29.2	1.1	1.1	-	99.9	89
Fourth year	74.1	18.5	3.7	3.7	-	100.0	27
Fifth year	71.4	28.6	-	-	-	100.0	7
Sixth year	100.0	-	-	-	-	100.0	3

N = 397 Missing cases = 634

While the original crosstabulation by field of subject specialisation failed to reach the required 005 level of statistical significance, it is interesting to note in the raw data the areas accounting for the highest incidence of public library usage. Education and social sciences or humanities represented the greatest proportion of public library usage for study purposes, with 20.9% and 18.0% of respondents, respectively, procuring at least one quarter of their library resources used for study from public libraries. Pure or applied sciences followed with 14.0%; creative arts with 11.1%; medical sciences with 8.7%; business, commerce or economics with

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8.5%; and engineering with 3.1% (because of the very few cases involved, management and computing have been omitted from this ranking).

As postulated, there was clear evidence in the crosstabulation by frequency of usage of the public library that more frequent public library users procured a greater proportion of their library resources used for study from the public library than did less frequent users (See Table 83). The method of subtracting an average 44% of cases from each of the cells in the 'Less than 10% column' has resulted, no doubt, in some inaccurate figures within that column, i.e. it is most likely to be overstating numbers in the 'never' and 'rarely ' uses it rows, and understating numbers in more frequent usage rows. Nevertheless, a definite trend i s evident in the table. For instance, 2.3% of the 'rare' public library users; 3.5% of those using the public library once or twice a year; and 5.5% of those using it every two or three months obtained more than a quarter of the library resources they used for study from the public library; compared with 20.6% of those who used it once or twice a month; 40.0% of those who used it about once a week; and 53.9% of those who use it more than weekly.

TABLE 83 : PROPORTION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES USED FOR STUDY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BY FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Revised Table

FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF PUBLIC LIBRARY	PROPORTION OF RESOURCES USED FOR STUDY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARY					TOTAL	
	Less than 10%	10% - 24%	25 %- 49%	50% - 74%	75% - 100%	%	No.
'Never' uses it	100.0	-	-	-	-	100.0	13
'Rarely ' uses it	95.4	2.3	2.3	-	-	100.0	76
Uses it once or twice a year	80.5	16.1	3.5	-	-	100.1	87
Uses it once in two or three months	68.5	26.1	4.4	1.1	-	100.1	92
Uses it once or twice a month	42.1	37.4	12.2	7.5	0.9	100.1	107
Uses it about once a week	28.6	31.4	20.0	14.3	5.7	100.0	35
Uses it more than weekly	15.4	30.8	38.5	15.4	-	100.1	13

N= 423 Missing cases = 608

4.56 Ratings of the quality of service provided by public libraries

4.561 Ratings of the quality of public library services overall

Before asking students to rate the quality of particular public library services, I wished to probe overall impressions of public library services as a whole. In **Question 17**, students were asked to indicate on a five point scale ranging from 'very good' to 'very poor' how they would rate the quality of service provided at the local public library **overall**. As anticipated, ratings were very much skewed to the positive side of the distribution, with the vast majority of respondents giving favourable ratings. Only 11.2% of respondents rated public library services as 'poor' or 'very poor'; while 51.2% rated them as 'good' or 'very good'; and 37.7% as 'average'. See Table 84.

TABLE 84 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	97	14.3
Good	251	36.9
Average	256	37.7
Poor	47	6.9
Very poor	29	4.3
TOTAL	680	100.1

Missing cases = 351

These ratings were analysed further by crosstabulating with several variables. Although there were some differences between ratings of the five educational institutions, they failed to reach the designated 0.05 significance level. Melbourne C A E students gave the highest ratings of the quality of public library services, by a small margin, with 60.0% saying they were 'good' or 'very good'; followed closely by Footscray I T with 58.4%; Swinburne at 56.2%; and La Trobe University at 50.0%. Proportions of of 'poor' and 'very poor' ratings by these four institutions were very close, ranging from 9.4% - 9.9%. Respondents from the University of Melbourne, however, gave noticeably lower ratings, with 42.4% claiming public library services were 'good' or 'very good', and 13.6% regarding them as 'poor' or 'very poor'.

Greater variations were evident with mode of study. Part time students gave more positive ratings and fewer negative ones than did full timers. 64.3% of part timers regarded public library services as 'good' or 'very good'; compared with only 46.5% of full timers. While only 8.4% of part timers viewed public library services as 'poor' or 'very poor'; 12.3% of full timers did. The results are presented in Table 35.

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TABLE 85 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL BY MODE OF STUDY

MODE OF STUDY	RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL					TOTAL	
	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	%	No.
Full time student	11.6	34.9	41.2	7.8	4.5	100.0	485
Part time student	21.8	42.5	27.4	4.5	3.9	100.1	179
External student	25.0	12.5	50.0	12.5	-	100.0	8

N = 672

Missing cases = 359

Chi square = 23.82916, df = 8, significance = 0.0081
Cramer's V = 0.13306

No discernible pattern was evident in the crosstabulation by year of course. However, with age group, there was a tendency for increasingly positive evaluations of the quality of public library services with increasing age. The only exception to this trend was amongst the under-twenties, where there was a slightly higher incidence of positive ratings than amongst those in their twenties. 'Good' or 'very good' ratings were given by 50.5% of the under- twenties; 41.6% of those aged 20 - 24 years; 46.7% of those 25 - 29 years; 66.3% of those in their thirties; 70.0% of those in their forties; and 100.0% of those 50 and above. Results, portrayed in Table 86, reached the required level of statistical significance.

TABLE 86 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL BY AGE GROUP

AGE GROUP	RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL					TOTAL	
	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	%	No.
15 - 19 years	16.8	33.7	38.1	6.9	4.5	100.0	202
20 - 24 years	8.3	33.3	45.1	9.1	4.2	100.0	264
25 - 29 years	11.7	35.0	46.7	3.3	3.3	100.0	60
30 - 39 years	22.1	44.2	26.3	4.2	3.2	100.0	95
40 - 49 years	17.5	52.5	15.0	7.5	7.5	100.0	40
50 - 59 years	42.9	57.1	-	-	-	100.0	7
60 - 69 years	50.0	50.0	-	-	-	100.0	4

N = 672

Missing cases = 359

Chi square = 53.01754, df = 24, significance = 0.0059
Cramer's V = 0.12552

Although the crosstabulation by field of subject specialisation did produce results which were statistically significant (Significance =0.0383), there were no clear cut patterns evident. Management and education yielded the two highest positive ratings (with 80.0% and 66.2% of respondents respectively rating the quality of library services as 'good' or 'very good'); and the two lowest - business, commerce or economics at 40.6%; and medical sciences at 30.4%. In between these two extremes came computing with 60.0%; creative arts, 58.6%; social sciences or humanities, 53.5%; engineering, 50.0%; and pure and applied sciences, 48.8%.

The analysis of 'quality of public library services' by 'frequency of usage of public libraries' revealed a distinct although predictable pattern of increasingly positive evaluations of the quality of public library services with more frequent public library use. Amongst the 'rare' users of the public library , 30.4% rated public libraries as 'good' or 'very good', compared with 45.3% of those who used the public library once or twice a year; 57.6% of those who used it every two or three months; 57.8% of those who used it once or twice a month; 67.4% of those who used it once a week; and 71.4% of those who used it more than weekly. As frequency of usage increased, proportions of negative evaluations ('poor' or 'very poor' ratings) decreased. The data is portrayed in Table 87. One odd feature of the Table is the fact that 25 respondents who claimed in response to Question 7 (d) 'never' to use the local public library then proceeded to fill out Part III of the questionnaire on 'Usage of the public library '. Whether these respondents mistakenly ticked the wrong column for frequency of public library use in Question 7 (d); or whether they were answering on the basis of past rather

than current usage habits is unclear. Seeing proportionately few cases are involved (less than 3.8% of cases in the Table), the overall reliability of the data is not greatly affected. This observation goes some way to explaining the discrepancy between the two sets of figures noted in Section 4.54.

TABLE 87 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL BY FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY	RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL					TOTAL	
	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	%	No.
'Never' uses it	8.0	16.0	48.0	12.0	16.0	100.0	25
'Rarely ' uses it	6.5	23.9	46.7	15.2	7.6	99.9	92
Uses it once or twice a year	12.6	32.7	44.7	5.7	4.4	100.1	159
Uses it once in two or three months	15.2	42.7	31.7	7.3	3.0	99.9	164
Uses it once or twice a month	14.9	42.9	35.4	4.3	2.5	100.0	161
Uses it about once a week	30.2	37.2	27.9	2.3	2.3	99.9	43
Uses it more than weekly	14.3	57.1	28.6	-	-	100.0	14

N = 658

Missing cases = 373

Chi square = 63.81334, df = 24, significance = 0.0003
Cramer's V = 0.13916

As public libraries do not aim to cater for tertiary students' needs, it was anticipated that ratings of the quality of public library services would tend to be higher for respondents using public libraries for recreational and general interest purposes than for course related / study purposes. Surprisingly, the reverse was true. 55.1% of respondents who used public

libraries for course related needs rated the quality of public library services as 'good' or 'very good', compared with 46.1% of those who used public libraries for recreational and general interest purposes. Similarly, negative (i.e. 'poor' and 'very poor') ratings were significantly lower for those using public libraries for course purposes (9.1%) than for recreational and general interest (13.4%). Perhaps because students do not expect public libraries to provide adequately for their study needs (i.e. their expectations of public libraries in this area are low), using them more as a secondary or supplementary source, they are reasonably pleased with the nature and level of service they do receive. Also, it is likely that many of those who currently use public libraries only for general interest and / or recreational purposes have in the past attempted unsuccessfully to locate course materials and hence have a negative attitude towards this aspect of public library service.

TABLE 88 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL BY REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

REASONS FOR USING THE PUBLIC LIBRARY	RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL					TOTAL	
	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	%	No.
Course/study needs (only)	9.0	38.5	41.0	9.0	2.6	100.1	78
General interest (only)	12.8	32.6	45.3	7.0	2.3	100.0	86
Recreation / leisure purposes (only)	6.1	27.3	50.0	7.6	9.1	100.1	66
As a place to study (only)	30.0	-	40.0	20.0	10.0	100.0	10
A combination of the above including study needs	16.9	40.9	34.4	5.2	2.6	100.0	308
A combination of the above excluding study needs	16.2	37.6	31.6	7.7	6.8	99.9	117

N = 665

Missing cases = 366

Chi square = 43.46876, df = 20, significance = 0.0124
Cramer's V = 0.11425

Analysis by 'proportion of library resources used for study coming from the public library ' demonstrated a strong tendency for increasingly positive ratings of the quality of public library

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services with greater proportions of library resources used for study coming from the public library. As explained in Section 4.55, there were problems with the original data for the 'proportion of library resources used for study coming from the public library ' variable, with the inclusion of 196 additional cases who did not use public libraries at all for study purposes in the 'Less than 10% category '. Hence figures in this category are based on estimates for each cell (which has had the effect of eliminating the 196 cases from the Table). The original data for this crosstabulation was highly significant. (Chi square = 54.48582 , df = 16 , Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.15663). However, no statistics have been calculated for the revised table, seeing the 'Less than 10%' category is based on figures which are estimates rather than actual cases. So, although caution is needed in interpreting the table, the strong trends are undeniable.

According to **Table 89** , respondents who obtained more than a quarter of the library resources they used for study from the public library had an 81.8% positive ('good' or 'very good') rating of the quality of public library services; 16.4% gave 'average' ratings; and only 1.8% a negative rating ('poor' or 'very poor'). This contrasted strongly with those obtaining less than a quarter of the library resources they used for study from the public library, whose positive ratings were considerably lower. 50.7% gave positive ratings; 38.0% 'average' ratings; and 11.2% negative ratings. For those using public libraries for less than 10% of the library resources they used for study, positive ratings were further down: 46.3% gave a positive rating; 39.6% an 'average' rating; and 14.1% a negative rating.

TABLE 89 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL BY PROPORTION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES USED FOR STUDY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

PROPORTION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES USED FOR STUDY COMING FROM THE PUBLIC LIBRARY	RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL					TOTAL	
	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	%	No.
Less than 10%	12.1	34.3	39.5	8.1	6.1	100.1	248
10 - 24%	17.2	44.4	34.3	4.0	-	99.9	99
25 - 49%	17.6	58.8	20.6	2.9	-	99.9	34
50 - 74%	44.4	44.4	11.1	-	-	99.9	18
75 - 100%	100.0	-	-	-	-	100.0	3

N = 402 Missing cases = 629

4.562 Ratings of the quality of particular resources, services and facilities provided by public libraries

In **Question 18** , students were asked to rate the quality of services in their local public libraries in particular areas including:

(1) Assistance from library staff

(2) Provision of materials for course related and study purposes

(3) Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study

(4) Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes

(5) Reference collections

(6) Journal and newspaper collections

(7) Audiovisual collections

(8) Computer facilities and services

(9) Photocopying facilities

(10) Loans services

(11) Interlibrary loans services

An 'Other (please specify)' option was provided. For each of these areas, respondents were to provide a rating on a five point scale, ranging from 'very good' to 'very poor'. Unlike the previous question ('How would you rate the quality of your local public library service **overall?**'), a sixth category was added for those who had 'no opinion' / were 'undecided'. It was felt this was necessary because repondents may have had no experience in using services in some of the areas listed, possibly because such services were not provided by the public libraries used.

Table 90 presents in condensed format ratings for services which are discussed individually in ensuing sections. **Table 91** carries the analysis a little further by providing summary rankings of most used to least used services: in an attempt to detect trends, the data has been aggregated in several different ways.

TABLE 90 : SUMMARY RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PARTICULAR RESOURCES, SERVICES AND FACILITIES PROVIDED BY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

NO OPINION RESOURCE, SERVICE OR FACILITY	POSITIVE (i.e. the sum of very good and 'good')	'AVERAGE' RATINGS	NEGATIVE RATINGS (i.e. the sum of 'poor' and 'very poor')	RATINGS RESP -ONSES
Library staff assistance	66.7	25.9	5.4	2.0
Provision of materials for course related / study purposes	12.6	25.7	53.2	8.5
Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study	57.0	34.9	5.1	3.0
Provision of materials for recreational / leisure purposes	58.8	25.9	7.3	7.9
Reference collections	38.1	37.6	14.2	10.1
Journal and newspaper collections	32.7	32.4	20.6	14.3
Audiovisual collections	10.9	20.2	31.1	37.8
Computer facilities and services	7.4	13.0	40.2	39.5
Photocopying facilities	23.3	42.3	22.4	12.1
Loans services	66.5	24.3	2.0	7.1
Interlibrary loans services	24.0	15.3	6.6	54.1

TABLE 91 RANKINGS OF PARTICULAR RESOURCES, SERVICES AND FACILITIES PROVIDED BY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

(a) Ranking on the basis of percentages of positive ratings (i.e. the sum of 'very good' and 'good' ratings)

1. Assistance from library staff	66.7
2. Loans services	66.5
3. Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes	58.8
4. Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study	57.0
5. Reference collections	38.1
6. Journal and newspaper collections	32.7
7. Interlibrary loans services	24.0
8. Photocopying facilities	23.3
9. Provision of materials for course related and study purposes	12.6
10. Audiovisual collections	10.9
11. Computer facilities and services	17.4

(b) Ranking on the basis of percentages of 'better than poor' ratings (i.e. the sum of 'average' and 'good' and 'very good' ratings)

1. Assistance from library staff	92.6
2. Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study	91.9
3. Loans services	90.8
4. Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes	84.7
5. Reference collections	75.7
6. Photocopying facilities	65.6
7. Journal and newspaper collections	65.1
8. Interlibrary loans services	39.3
9. Provision of materials for course related and study purposes	38.3
10. Audiovisual collections	31.1
11. Computer facilities and services	20.4

TABLE 91 (Cont'd)

(c) **Ranking on the basis of percentages of negative ratings (i.e. the sum of 'poor' and 'very poor' ratings)** (arranged from least to greatest)

1. Loans services	2.0
2. Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study	5.1
3. Assistance from library staff	5.4
4. Interlibrary loans services	6.6
5. Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes	7.3
6. Reference collections	14.2
7. Journal and newspaper collections	20.6
8. Photocopying facilities	22.4
9. Audiovisual collections	31.1
10. Computer facilities and services	40.2
11. Provision of materials for course related and study purposes	53.2

(d) **Ranking on the basis of percentages of positive ratings (i.e. the sum of 'very good' and 'good' ratings), but with 'undecided / no opinion' responses deleted**

1. Loans services	71.6
2. Assistance from library staff	68.0
3. Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes	63.9
4. Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study	58.8
5. Interlibrary loans services	52.3
6. Reference collections	42.4
7. Journal and newspaper collections	38.2
8. Photocopying facilities	26.5
9. Audiovisual collections	17.1
10. Provision of materials for course related and study purposes	13.9
11. Computer facilities and services	12.2

TABLE 91 (Cont'd)

(e) Ranking on the basis of percentages of 'better than poor' ratings (i.e. the sum of 'average' and 'good' and 'very good' ratings), but with 'undecided / no opinion' responses deleted

1. Loans services	97.8
2. Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study	94.7
3. Assistance from library staff	94.5
4. Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes	92.1
5. Interlibrary loans services	85.6
6. Reference collections	84.3
7. Journal and newspaper collections	76.0
8. Photocopying facilities	74.5
9. Audiovisual collections	50.1
10. Provision of materials for course related and study purposes	41.9
11. Computer facilities and services	33.7

Although there are some minor variations in service rankings according to how the data was aggregated, in an examination of the percentages in each ranking, the services seemed to fall into three areas:

(1) Strong positive ratings Four service areas attracted strong positive ratings. These were:

Loans services

Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study

Library staff assistance

Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes

(2) Moderate positive ratings Another four areas received positive ratings overall, but not to the extent of the 'top four' services. These included:

Interlibrary loans services

Reference collections

Journal and newspaper collections

Photocopying facilities

The relative ranking of reference collections; journal and newspaper collections; and photocopying facilities varied little across the sets of rankings. However, the position of interlibrary loans services varied greatly according to the basis of aggregation: this was due primarily to the large number of 'undecided / no opinion' responses, with 54.1% of

respondents obviously having had no experience in using interlibrary loans services, and many being unaware even of what they were.

(3) **Strong negative ratings** After photocopying facilities, there was a marked drop in overall percentages to the three lowest ranking services, which received fairly strong to strong negative ratings. These were:

Audiovisual collections

Provision of materials for course related and study purposes

Computer facilities and services

Judging by the high incidence of 'undecided / no opinion' responses, and some written comments, it appears that many public libraries have no computer facilities to speak of, and very limited audiovisual collections. 39.5% of respondents gave 'no opinion' responses for 'computer facilities and services'; and 37.8% for 'audiovisual collections'; this affected the relative position of these service areas in the different rankings.

(c) Assistance from library staff

As seen in previous rankings, library staff assistance was one of the four most positively rated service areas in public libraries. In termsof number of straight positive ratings (i.e. 'good' and 'very good' ratings combined), it surpassed all other areas, including loans services, by a narrow margin (66.7% c.f. 66.5%). However, negative ratings ('poor' and 'very poor') were slightly higher than for loans services (5.4% c.f. 2.0%). **Table 92** portrays the frequencies data for ratings of the quality of library staff assistance in public libraries.

TABLE 92 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF LIBRARY STAFF ASSISTANCE IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	168	25.2
Good	277	41.5
Average	173	25.9
Poor	27	4.1
Very poor	9	1.3
No opinion / undecided	13	2.0
TOTAL	667	100.0

Missing cases = 364

Respondents from La Trobe University and Footscray I T rated public library staff assistance most highly of the five institutions, with 73.6% and 70.7% positive ratings; and 2.8% and 1.2% negative ratings, respectively. Melbourne C A E followed with 69.4% positive ratings, but also had the highest incidence of negative ratings - 10.2%. Swinburne I T and the

University of Melbourne recorded the lowest positive ratings: 63.6% and 62.6% respectively; and negative ratings of 4.5% and 5.7%. Results were statistically significant. (Chi square = 55.37540, df = 25, Significance = 0.0032, Cramer's V = 0.13013).

With mode of study, part timers rated the quality of public library staff assistance slightly higher than did full timers (71.3% positive and 3.3% negative ratings for part time respondents; c.f. 64.1% and 6.4% respectively for full timers). However, these results failed to reach the required 0.05 level of statistical significance.

No significant variations between categories were evident in crosstabulations by year of course; age group; or reasons for using the public library. While the crosstabulation by level of course reached the required level of statistical significance, no meaningful trends were evident: doctoral students were the least likely to rate staff assistance as good; percentages for all other categories were close. Field of subject specialisation also yielded results which were significant in statistical terms (Chi square = 77.75266, df = 54, Significance = 0.0188, Cramer's V = 0.14034). The two areas with the highest positive ratings were education with 79.5%; and social sciences or humanities with 72.7%. However, there appeared to be no particular pattern in subsequent ranking subject areas, which ranged between 55.0% and 65.5%.

(b) Provision of materials for course related and study purposes

With only 12.6% positive ratings and 53.2% negative ones, this was one of the three lowest ranking service areas in public libraries. However, this should not overshadow the fact that tertiary students do make considerable use of public libraries for course needs, as revealed earlier. **Table 93** gives the frequencies data for ratings of this variable.

TABLE 93 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PROVISION OF MATERIALS FOR COURSE RELATED / STUDY PURPOSES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	8	1.2
Good	74	11.4
Average	166	25.7
Poor	190	29.4
Very poor	154	23.8
No opinion / undecided	55	8.5
TOTAL	647	100.0

Missing cases = 384

Results

On the face of it, these low ratings would appear to conflict with data presented in the previous secion (Section 4.561), where it was found that students who used public libraries for course related and study purposes gave higher **overall** ratings of public library services than did students who used public libraries purely for recreation and general interest. However, this can be explained. It appears that many of those who currently use public libraries purely for recreational or general interest purposes have previously attempted, unsuccessfully, to procure study materials from public libraries, and have, as a result, become rather disillusioned with this aspect of service in public libraries. Proportionately more students who used their public libraries for recreation and general interest purposes only gave more negative ratings of 'provision of materials for course related and study purposes' than did those who currently made some use of public libraries for study purposes. In the crosstabulation by 'reasons for using the public library ', 'very good' or 'good' ratings for the quality of provision of materials for course purposes in public libraries were assigned by 19.1% of those who used public libraries for study purposes, and by only 3.2% of those who did not. If 'average' ratings are added to the positive ratings, the percentages become 53.3% of those who used the public library for study purposes c.f. 16.8% of those who did not. There was a 64.9% negative rating and 18.3% undecided, amongst those who did not use their public libraries for study purposes: c.f. 44.7% negative and 2.1% undecided amongst those who did use public libraries for study purposes. Results were highly significant. (Chi square = 169.55541, df = 25, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.23127).

Another factor which can explain the high incidence of negative ratings here concerns the distinction between usage of public libraries as a **primary vs. secondary source of course materials**. It is my argument that these ratings emphasise the poor standing of public libraries as **libraries of first resort** for students' course needs. Respondents were under no illusions over the inability of public libraries to cater adequately for their study needs. They saw quite clearly the relative functions and roles of academic and public libraries: academic libraries being specifically established to provide for course needs, and public libraries for the broad ranging needs and interests of the general public.

Many of the students who added 'other comments' at the end of the questionnaire strongly emphasised the point that the roles of academic and public libraries are quite distinct, and that students do not expect their public libraries to be a major source for their specialised course requirements.

Nevertheless, given significant problem areas in the provision of academic library services, especially the unavailability of materials when needed, and inconveniently short loans periods, many students do seek out alternative sources of materials for course and study purposes. Public libraries are one of these sources. Most students realise that public libraries, due to their charter and to severe resource constraints, can be only **libraries of second resort** for course materials, and approach them as such. In this respect, expectations are low, but when public libraries do manage to 'deliver the goods', satisfaction levels rise. Hence, students who do regularly procure even a small proportion of their study materials from public libraries are more likely to give more favourable ratings of this aspect of library services than those who do not.

When results were crosstabulated by educational institution, there were some variations between institutions' ratings of the quality of provision of materials for course and study purposes in public libraries. However, differences were not great and marginally missed reaching the designated .05 level of significance. (Significance = 0.0591). Footscray I T recorded the highest positive ratings (20.3%), and the lowest negative ones (38.0%). The University of Melbourne registered the lowest incidence of positive responses (10.3%) and the highest rate of negative ones (60.5%). The other three institutions were close in their ratings: Melbourne C A E had 13.1% positive and 47.7% negative; Swinburne I T, 12.3% positive and 54.7% negative; and La Trobe University 11.5% positive and 51.9% negative.

With mode of study, part time respondents had a slightly higher incidence of positive ratings and a lower incidence of negative ratings of the quality of public libraries' provision of materials for course related purposes than did full timers. However, percentages were close, again narrowly missing attaining the 0.05 significance level. (Significance = 0.0632). The crosstabulation by subject field was statistically non-significant, with the data revealing no meaningful patterns.

Results for the crosstabulation by level of course were statistically significant (Chi square = 51.52241, df = 25, Significance = 0.0014, Cramer's V = 0.12759). More positive ratings were evident at the lower course levels, becoming less so with each higher level. Positive ('very good' or 'good') ratings were assigned by 22.2% of undergraduate diploma students; 12.9% of undergraduate degree; 5.3% of postgraduate diploma; 3.8% of Masters; and 7.1% of doctoral students.

A similar strong trend was evident with year of course. With each additional year of course, there was a marked decrease in positive ratings, and a concurrent increase in negative ones. With first years, 15.9% gave positive ratings, and 41.0% negative; compared with 14.0% positive and 55.8% negative for second years; 8.3% positive and 64.8% negative for third years; 8.0% positive and 72.0% negative for fourth years; 7.1% positive and 42.8% negative for fifth years; and 0.0% positive and 100.0% negative for sixth years. Table 94 portrays the results in detail.

TABLE 94 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PROVISION OF MATERIALS FOR COURSE RELATED / STUDY PURPOSES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES BY YEAR OF COURSE

YEAR OF COURSE	RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PROVISION OF MATERIALS FOR COURSE RELATED / STUDY PURPOSES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES						TOTAL	
	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	No opinion/ undecided	%	No.
First year	1.6	14.3	34.7	23.9	17.1	8.4	100.0	251
Second year	1.2	12.8	19.8	31.4	24.4	10.5	100.1	172
Third year	1.4	6.9	20.7	39.3	25.5	6.2	100.0	145
Fourth year	-	8.0	12.0	26.0	46.0	8.0	100.0	50
Fifth year	-	7.1	35.7	7.1	35.7	14.3	99.9	14
Sixth year	-	-	-	50.0	50.0	-	100.0	4

N = 636
Missing cases = 395
Chi square = 54.55316,
df = 25, significance = 0.0006
Cramer's V = 0.13098

Results

Analysis by age group revealed highest ratings amongst the 15 - 19 year age group, with few marked variations thereafter. At least 'average' ratings were assigned by 49.8% of the under-twenties; compared with 32.7% of those in their twenties; 33.4% of those in their thirties; and 34.2% of those in their forties. Figures for the fifties and sixties are unreliable, due to the few cases involved. There was a marked tendancy for 'undecided' ratings to increase with age: 3.1% amongst the under-twenties; 7.5% in those 20 -24 years; 11.5% in those 25 - 29 years; 17.2% of those in their thirties; and 15.8% in their forties. Results here were highly significant, with a moderate correlation. (Chi square = 77.46910, df = 30, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.15559).

(c) Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study

As can be seen in the table of frequencies for this variable (**Table 95**), responses here were strongly skewed to the positive side of the distribution, with 57.0% positive ratings and only 5.1% negative. Along with loans services, library staff assistance, and provision of materials for recreational / leisure purposes, this rated as one of the strongest positive ratings of all the service areas listed.

TABLE 95 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PROVISION OF MATERIALS FOR GENERAL INTEREST / INFORMATION UNRELATED TO STUDY IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	97	14.7
Good	279	42.3
Average	230	34.9
Poor	26	3.9
Very poor	8	1.2
No opinion / undecided	20	3.0
TOTAL	660	100.0

Missing cases = 371

No noticeable variations in responses were evident amongst those from different educational institutions; part timers vs. full timers; those from different years of courses or course levels; of different ages; or from different subject specialisations.

With 'reasons for using the public library', there was a slight tendency for those who used the public library for course needs to rate the quality of provision of materials for general interest purposes in public libraries more highly than did those who used public libraries only for general interest and / or recreational purposes. 59.7% of those who used public libraries for study purposes assigned positive rankings, and only 2.3%, negative ones; while 53.5% of those who did not use public libraries for course purposes gave positive ratings, and 9.6% negative ones. Results were highly significant, with a moderate correlation. (Chi square = 107.30788, df = 30, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.18199).

(d) Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes

With a 58.8% positive rating, and a 7.3% negative one, this was one of the four top ranking service areas in public libraries. Table 96 portrays the frequencies data.

TABLE 96 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PROVISION OF MATERIALS FOR RECREATIONAL / LEISURE PURPOSES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	103	15.6
Good	285	43.2
Average	171	25.9
Poor	39	5.9
Very poor	9	1.4
No opinion / undecided	52	7.9
TOTAL	659	99.9

Missing cases = 372

None of the crosstabulations performed on this variable generated statistically significant results or meaningful patterns.

(e) Reference collections

Ratings here were moderately positive, with 38.1% of respondents rating public library reference collections as 'good' or 'very good', and only 14.2% as 'poor' or 'very poor'. Quite a high percentage of respondents were non-commital in their ratings, with 37.6% assigning an 'average' rating, and 10.1% undecided. Table 97 details the results.

TABLE 97 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF REFERENCE COLLECTIONS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	54	8.4
Good	191	29.7
Average	242	37.6
Poor	68	10.6
Very poor	23	3.6
No opinion / undecided	65	10.1
TOTAL	643	100.0

Missing cases = 388

Ratings of the quality of public library reference collections did vary to some extent amongst the five institutions. Results were statistically significant (Chi square = 50.08949, df = 25, Significance = 0.0021, Cramer's V = 0.12620). Respondents from Footscray I T rated public library reference collections most highly, with a 53.9% positive, and a 10.5% negative rating; followed by Melbourne C A E, with a 49.4% positive and 10.8% negative rating. The University of Melbourne, Swinburne I T and La Trobe University had significantly lower overall ratings, with 35.2%, 34.6% and 31.4% positive responses, respectively. While Swinburne I T and the University of Melbourne had the highest negative ratings (17.5% and 15.6% respectively), La Trobe University had the lowest rate of negative responses of all the institutions (9.8%).

Full time students were more likely than part timers to rate the quality of public library reference collections highly, with a 40.2% positive, and a 12.4% negative rating; compared with a 33.0% positive and 16.8% negative rating for part timers. (Chi square = 22.64360, df = 10, Significance = 0.0121, Cramer's V = 0.13342).

With level of course, undergraduates were more likely than postgraduates to rate the quality of reference collections in public libraries as 'good' or 'very good' - 40.0% for undergraduates

and 27.6% for postgraduates. (Chi square = 37.72930, df = 25, Significance = 0.0492, Cramer's V = 0.10927).

Although the crosstabulation by year of course narrowly missed attaining the required level of statistical significance (Significance = .0940), the raw data demonstrated a tendency for more positive ratings in the early years of courses, with a progressive decline in ratings with each additional year. First year saw a 47.0% positive rating, and an 11.1% negative one; in second year, a 32.9% positive and 15.9% negative rating; 33.3% and 13.9% respectively in third year; and 23.0% and 23.0% in fourth year.

With age group, the highest positive ratings were amongst the 15 - 19 year olds, with a progressive decline thereafter. 88.7% of those 15 - 19 years rated the quality of public library reference collections as at least 'average'; compared with 75.3% of those aged 20 - 24; 62.2% of those 25 - 29; 61.1% in their thirties; and 68.5% in their forties. Results were highly significant and the two variables moderately correlated. (Chi square = 89.70941, df = 30, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.16796).

'Reasons for using public libraries' had an impact upon evaluation of the quality of reference collections in public libraries. 82.9% of those who used public libraries for study purposes gave at least 'average' ratings to the quality of public library reference collections; 9.8% gave negative ratings; and 7.4% were undecided. In comparison, 65.7 % of respondents who did not use public libraries for study purposes assigned at least 'average' ratings; 19.5% made negative evaluations; and 14.7% were undecided. Again, results were highly significant and the variables moderately correlated. (Chi square = 66.39893, df = 25, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.14519). It appears that there is some sort of halo effect with those who do manage to satisfy some of their course needs at the local public library: they are more inclined than those who do not use public libraries for study to rate positively most aspects of public library service.

(f) Journals and newspapers

While overall results are mildly positive, ratings are noticeably lower than for 'reference collections'. Here 32.7% of respondents gave favourable ratings; but 20.6% rated journal and newspaper collections negatively. Ag ain, there was a high incidence of 'fence sitting', neither positive nor negative reactions, with 32.4% assigning an 'average' rating, and 14.3% with 'no opinion'. (See Table 98).

TABLE 98 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF JOURNAL AND NEWSPAPER COLLECTIONS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	43	6.7
Good	166	26.0
Average	207	32.4
Poor	91	14.3
Very poor	40	6.3
No opinion / undecided	91	14.3
TOTAL	638	100.0

Missing cases = 393

Results

No significant patterns were discernible in the spread of results for most of the crosstabulations made. With year of course, results by a small margin failed to reach the 0.05 level of significance (Significance = 0.0725). However, in the data there was a definite tendency for more positive and fewer negative ratings in earlier years of courses, and less positive and more negative ratings in later years of courses. A similar picture emerged in the crosstabulation by level of course. With a significance level of 0.0625, results narrowly missed the 0.05 level, but the raw data showed more positive ratings amongst undergraduates than postgraduates - 33.7% and 26.3% respectively.

(g) Audiovisual collections

The very high incidence of 'undecided' responses (37.8%) suggests either that audiovisual services offered in many public libraries are limited or totally non-existent; or that many respondents have never used them. Of those who had, only 10.9% rated these services positively; 3.1% rated them negatively; and a further 20.2% as 'average'. Undoubtedly, these services suffer in comparison with the much more extensive audiovisual collections in academic libraries. **Table 99** outlines the frequencies data on ratings of the quality of audiovisual collections in public libraries.

TABLE 99 : RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF AUDIOVISUAL COLLECTIONS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	9	1.5
Good	56	9.4
Average	120	20.2
Poor	113	19.1
Very poor	71	12.0
No opinion / undecided	224	37.8
TOTAL	593	100.0

Missing cases = 438

None of the crosstabulations made against this variable yielded statistically significant or meaningful results.

(h) Computer facilities and services

Of all areas listed, this was rated the most negatively, with a 40.2% negative rating; and only a 7.4% positive one. Almost 40% of respondents had 'no opinion', attributable, no doubt, to the total lack of computer facilities and services in many public libraries. Again this is an area which suffers greatly in comparison with the computer facilities of the better endowed university and college libraries. Table 100 provides the frequencies data for this variable.

TABLE 100: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF COMPUTER FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	8	1.4
Good	35	6.0
Average	76	13.0
Poor	110	18.8
Very poor	125	21.4
No opinion/undecided	231	39.5
TOTAL	585	100.1

Missing cases = 446

Few of the crosstabulations made against this variable revealed any meaningful trends. While the crosstabulation by educational institution did yield results which were statistically significant (Significance = 0.0202), it was difficult to detect any definite pattern in variations between the institutions. With age group, results were statistically significant (Significance = 0.0363), and showed a slight tendency for a decrease in positive ratings, and an increase in 'undecided' ratings with increasing age - however differences were not marked.

(i) Photocopying facilities

Photocopying facilities had, very nearly, equal positive and negative ratings (23.3% and 22.4% respectively). (See Table 101). A significant proportion (42.3%) were non-commital, opting for an 'average' rating. As seen earlier (Section 4.53), photocopiers were the second most often used public library service, after loans services. However, reactions to these services were mixed, as explained in some students' 'Other comments'. Some highlighted the convenience of the public library photocopiers, and the fact that they managed to avoid the interminable photocopying queues in their academic libraries. Others complained that photocopying in public libraries was more expensive than at university or college; or that there were too few machines available. Obviously, there is considerable variation in the quality of photocopying services amongst public libraries. Another influencing factor is how satisfactory photocopying facilities are in the student's own academic library. If services are good, again the public library suffers in comparison.

TABLE 101: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PHOTOCOPYING FACILITIES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	22	3.4
Good	127	19.9
Average	270	42.3
Poor	113	17.7
Very poor	30	4.7
No opinion / undecided	77	12.1
TOTAL	639	100.1

Missing cases = 392

No noticeable variations were observed in the spread of results amongst the five institutions, nor by field of subject specialisation. Although the crosstabulation by year of course did not reach the required 0.05 level of statistical significance (Significance = 0.1347), there was a consistent trend in the data for more positive and fewer negative ratings in early years, with more negative ratings in each subsequent year of course. Similarly, with level of course (Significance = 0.1021), higher degree students gave less positive ratings than undergraduates or postgraduate diploma students (11.5% of Masters and 13.4% of doctoral students rated public library photocopying facilities as 'good' or 'very good'; compared with

30.6% of undergraduate diploma; 22.4% of undergraduate degree; and 26.3% of postgraduate diploma students).

In the analysis by age group, the highest ratings were amongst the youngest students, with a marked drop in ratings thereafter. 72.3% of 15 -19 year olds assigned at least 'average' ratings to the quality of photocopying services in public libraries, compared with 62.5% of those aged 20 - 24; 53.8% of those 25 - 29; 66.6% of those in their thirties; and 63.8% of those in their forties. Results were highly significant, statistically speaking, and showed a moderate correlation between the two variables. (Chi square = 76.26793, df = 30, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.15536).

With 'reasons for using the public library ', those who used public libraries for course needs rated the quality of photocopying facilities in public libraries more positively than those who did not. 70.3% of respondents who used public libraries for study purposes assigned at least 'average' ratings to photocopying facilities, compared with only 58.3% of those who used public libraries only for general interest and / or recreational purposes. As noted earlier, there seems to be a halo effect with some ratings, with those who can satisfy at least some of their course needs from public library collections revealing a more positive evaluation of most aspects of public library services. Again, results were highly significant and moderately correlated. (Chi square = 57.11623, df = 25, Significance = 0.0003, Cramer's V = 0.13516).

(j) Loans services

As well as being by far the most used service in public libraries, loans services were also the most positively rated overall, with a 66.5% positive rating, and only a 2.0% negative one. (See Table 102). Very limited loans periods in academic libraries were a major cause of dissatisfaction amongst respondents. The convenience of being able to borrow from public libraries for three or four weeks, with relatively minimal fines for items overdue, was greatly valued by students, especially by those who managed to procure relevant study materials.

TABLE 102: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF LOANS SERVICES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	105	16.3
Good	324	50.2
Average	157	24.3
Poor	11	1.7
Very poor	2	0.3
No opinion / undecided	46	7.1
TOTAL	645	99.9

Missing cases = 386

There were noticeable variations in ratings of the quality of public library loans services amongst the five institutions. Negative ratings were close, ranging from 0.0% for Footscray I T

to 3.0% for La Trobe University. However, positive ratings varied considerably. Melbourne C A E had the highest incidence of positive ratings: 80.2%; followed closely by Footscray I T with 74.4%. The other three institutions had a much lower incidence of positive responses: 63.5% for the University of Melbourne; 63.2% for Swinburne I T; and 59.4% for La Trobe University. (Chi square = 40.08657, df = 25, Significance = 0.0286, Cramer's V = 0.11272).

Some of the crosstabulations peformed on this variable did not yield results which were statistically significant (those by mode of study; year of course; and field of subject specialisation). A couple were highly significant in statistical terms, but had differences which revealed no meaningful patterns (crosstabulations by level of course and age group).

In the crosstabulation by 'reasons for using public libraries', those who used public libraries for study purposes rated the quality of public library loans services much more highly than those who used public libraries only for recreational and / or general interest purposes. 73.2% of the former group assigned positive ratings; compared with 57.0% of the latter - maintaining the halo effect referred to earlier. Results here were significant, but the correlation fairly low. (Chi square = 38.30820, df = 25, Significance = 0.0432, Cramer's V = 0.11010).

(k) Interlibrary loans services

Of all service areas, this had the highest incidence of 'no opinion / undecided' responses. Many students obviously were unfamiliar with the term 'interlibrary loans', and were unaware any such services existed in libraries. This helps to explain (in part) the low incidence of usage of interlibrary loans services in public libraries (See Section 4.53). Another reason for the low usage of interlibrary loans services would be the relative slowness of the service, which is unacceptable to most tertiary students, given the immediacy of their information needs. As presented in **Table 103** , of respondents who were familiar with interlibrary loans services , most (24.0%) rated them positively; 15.3% considered them 'average'; and only 6.6% rated them negatively.

TABLE 103: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF INTERLIBRARY LOANS SERVICES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very good	36	6.3
Good	102	17.7
Average	88	15.3
Poor	25	4.3
Very poor	13	2.3
No opinion / undecided	311	54.1
TOTAL	575	100.0

Missing cases = 456

Statistically significant variations were evident amongst the five institutions' ratings of the quality of interlibrary loans services in public libraries. (Chi square = 45.41789, df = 25,

Significance = 0.0075, Cramer's V = 0.12725). While negative ratings were close (in the range of 4.3% - 9.5%), positive ratings varied much more. Respondents from Melbourne C A E yielded the highest positive rating - 42.1%; followed by Footscray I T with 30.4%. Percentages for the other three institutions were close, but much lower - 21.0% for La Trobe University; 19.9% for the University of Melbourne; and 18.4% for Swinburne I T.

Crosstabulations by mode of study, level of course, field of subject specialisation and reasons for using the public library failed to yield statistically significant results.However, results were statistically significant for the crosstabulations by year of course and age group. With year of course (Chi square = 53.24812, df = 25, Significance = 0.0008, Cramer's V = 0.13729), positive ratings were highest in first year, and decreased each subsequent year: with 30.0% in first year; 22.8% in second year; 21.3% in third year; 11.1% in fourth year; and 0.0% in fifth and sixth years. A similar trend is evident in the crosstabulation by age group (Chi square = 49.12846, df = 30, Significance = 0.0153, Cramer's V = 0.13141) - with significantly higher ratings amongst the under-twenties, and a marked drop thereafter. While 30.4% assigned 'good' or 'very good' ratings to the quality of interlibrary loans services in public libraries, the same was true for only 20.4% of those 20 -24 years; 22.0% of those 25 - 29 years; 22.1% of those in their thirties; and 22.1% of those in their forties.

(l) 'Other' services

Although twenty respondents ticked the 'other' option here, comments provided were primarily elaborations on previous points (e.g. *'My public library doesn't have any computer services.'*) ; general complaints or suggestions (e.g. *'Need for more up -to-date material'* or *'Need for study areas suiting different requirements - single, group discussion rooms, etc.'*); or services which were subsumed under existing headings (e.g. *'Cassette tapes '*) . No additional services provided by local public libraries were mentioned.

4.57 Comparative ratings of the quality of services provided by academic libraries and public libraries

To supplement data on the quality of local public library services, students were asked two questions which involved giving comparative ratings of the quality of services provided by academic and public libraries. The first was a general impressionistic question asking for an overall comparison of services provided in each library; while the second asked students to compare quality of particular service areas in their academic and public libraries. It was realised from the outset that such questions were grossly unfair to public libraries, in terms of comparing libraries vastly different in nature, size and levels of resourcing. Nevertheless, to clearly establish the relative roles of academic and public libraries in the lives of tertiary students, such questions were considered useful.

4.571 Ratings of the quality of services provided by public libraries compared with those of academic libraries overall

In **Question 19** , students were asked: 'In comparison with your university or college library, would you say service **overall** at your local public library is (1) Much better (2) Better (3) As good (4) Inferior (5) Greatly inferior?'

Results are presented in **Table 104** . Predictably, given the great differences in the nature and size of academic and public libraries, only a very small minority of respondents (11.8%) claimed that their public library services were 'much better' or 'better' than those at their university or college libraries. However, more than a quarter of respondents considered them 'as good'. Almost two thirds (62.6%) considered them 'inferior' or 'greatly inferior'.

Results

TABLE 104: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES OVERALL

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Much better	18	2.7
Better	60	9.1
As good	169	25.6
Inferior	297	45.0
Greatly inferior	116	17.6
TOTAL	660	100.0

Missing cases = 37 ;

In crosstabulating 'comparative ratings of the quality of services provided by academic and public libraries' by educational institution, results failed to reach the specified 0.05 level of statistical significance (Significance = 0.2655). However, an analysis of the spread of results showed that students from Melbourne C A E and Footscray I T gave much more positive ratings than those from other institutions for which results were close. Services in public libraries were rated at least 'as good' as academic library services by 48.2% of Melbourne C A E respondents, and 46.9% of those from Footscray I T; compared with a range of 32.5% - 33.8% for the other three institutions.

With level of course, undergraduates were less likely to give positive ratings, and more likely to give inferior ratings than were postgraduate students. 35.3% of undergraduates rated the quality of services provided by public libraries at least 'as good' as those of academic libraries; compared with 44.0% of postgraduates. 64.7% of undergraduates gave 'inferior' or 'greatly inferior' ratings, while only 55.1% of postgraduates did so. (Chi square = 34.26172, df = 20, Significance = 0.0244, Cramer's V =0.11488).

With mode of study and field of subject specialisation, no particular trends were discernible for different categories of respondents, and results were non-significant statistically. The only striking aspect of the table for field of subject specialisation were the very high positive ratings for education (52.1%) and management (75.0%), compared with the other areas.

While the crosstabulations by year of course and age group also fell short of the 0.05 significance level (Significance = 0.1580, and 0.0802, respectively), there were definite trends evident in the raw data. With year of course, ratings were most positive in first year, and increasingly less so in each subsequent year of course. In first year, 43.1% of respondents rated public library services at least 'as good' as academic library services; compared with 38.5% of respondents in second year; 34.6% in third year; 20.8% in fourth year; 21.4% in fifth

year; and 0.0% in sixth year. With age group, the pattern was a little different. Respondents under twenty years gave quite a high percentage of positive responses, but this dropped dramatically amongst those aged 20 - 24 years; and progressively increased with age thereafter. Amongst the under-twenties, 42.9% of respondents rated public libray services at least 'as good' as academic library services; compared with 29.3% of those aged 20 -24 years; 31.6% of those 25 - 29 years; 41.8% of those 30 - 39 years; 55.2% of those 40 -49 years; 50.0% of those 50 -59 years; and 100.0% of those 60 -69 years.

As was expected, with 'frequency of usage of the public library ', there was a strong trend for increasingly positive and decreasingly negative ratings with more frequent public library use. Results are presented in **Table 105**, a condensed version of the original table (for which Chi square = 86.13074, df = 24, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.18371).

TABLE 105: RATINGS OF THE OVERALL QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES COMPARED WITH THOSE OF UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES BY FREQUENCY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY USE

FREQUENCY OF USAGE OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY	COMPARATIVE RATINGS OF THE OVERALL QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES COMPARED WITH THOSE OF UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES			TOTAL (of (b) and (c) below)	
	(a) Much better	(b) At least as good (i.e. a merging of 'much better', 'better' and 'as good'	(c) Inferior or or greatly inferior	%	No.
'Rarely ' uses it	2.2	15.6	84.1	99.9	88
Uses it once or twice a year	6.0	29.7	70.4	100.1	152
Uses it once in two or three months	10.3	39.0	60.9	99.9	164
Uses it once or twice a month	15.8	48.0	51.9	99.9	152
Uses it weekly or more than weekly	32.1	55.3	44.6	99.9	56

N = 612

Missing cases = 419

Analysing ratings by 'reasons for using the public library ' revealed that those who used public libraries for study purposes were more likely to give ratings which were at least 'as good' as academic libraries, and less likely to give negative ('inferior' or 'greatly interior') ratings than were those who used public libraries for recreational and / or general interest purposes only. 42.4% of those who made some use of public libraries for course related / study purposes rated the quality of public library services at least 'as good' as academic library services; compared with 32.0% of those who used public libraries only for recreation and / or general interest. And, conversely, 57.6% of those using libraries for their study needs gave negative ratings; compared with 68.0% of those who used public libraries for recreation and general interest purposes only. Results here were statistically significant (Chi square = 35.56872, df = 20, Significance = 0.0173, Cramer's V = 0.11760). This tends to add further support for the notion that many of those who currently use public libraries purely for recreation and / or general interest have previously tried to use them for study purposes, unsuccessfully, and that this has had a negative effect on their overall evaluation of public library services.

Amongst respondents using public libraries for study purposes, higher proportions of library resources used for study coming from the public library were associated with more positive ratings of public library services, and lower proportions with more negative ratings. Results in the original table were highly significant. (Chi square = 145.24598, df = 16, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.23479). However, for reasons outlined in Section 4.55, the data outlined here is based on an amended version of the original table. Of those who procured less than 10% of their study materials form public libraries, 29.4% gave public libraries ratings at least 'as good' as academic libraries; while 70.6% gave 'inferior' or 'greatly inferior' ratings. Amongst those acquiring 11 %- 14% of the library resources they used for study from public libraries, 54.6% gave positive ratings, and 45.3% negative ones. With those who drew on public libraries for more than one quarter of their library resources used for study, 76.9% gave positive ratings, and 23.1% negative ones.

4.572 Ratings of the quality of particular resources, services and facilities in public libraries compared with those in academic libraries

Question 20 asked students 'In comparison with your university or college library, would you say services in each of the following areas at your local public library is : (1) Much better (2) Better (3) As good (4) Inferior (5) Greatly inferior?' The eleven service areas listed were identical to those given in Question 18 'Ratings of the quality of particular services provided by public libraries'. A sixth category was added for 'No opinion / Undecided'.

The following two tables present this data in summary format. Subsequently, each of the service areas is discussed individually. Table 106 is a summary table of the positive, negative and 'undecided' ratings for each area; while Table 107 provides rankings of these services according to several different means of aggregation.

TABLE 106: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PARTICULAR RESOURCES, SERVICES AND FACILITIES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES

Summary Table

RESOURCE, SERVICE OR FACILITY	Positive ratings (i.e. the sum of 'much better' and 'better'	'As good as' ratings	Negative ratings (i.e. the sum of 'inferior' and 'greatly inferior'	Undecided/ No opinion responses
Library staff assistance	25.6	42.2	28.6	3.5
Provision of materials for course related / study purposes	4.1	6.8	84.8	4.3
Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study	34.8	32.3	26.2	6.8
Provision of materials for recreational / leisure purposes	45.6	27.8	15.6	10.9
Reference collections	5.1	19.0	68.2	7.7
Journal and newspaper collections	10.4	14.0	62.5	13.1
Audiovisual collections	5.3	4.9	59.9	29.9
Computer facilities	4.1	5.5	62.6	27.7
Photocopying facilities	6.4	17.4	68.5	7.8
Loans services	26.3	46.2	14.1	13.3
Interlibrary loans services	11.9	18.0	14.3	55.7

TABLE 107 RATING OF THE QUALITY OF PARTICULAR RESOURCES, SERVICES AND FACILITIES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH ACADEMIC LIBRARIES: RANKINGS

(a) Ranking on the basis of percentages of positive ratings (i.e. the sum of 'much better' and 'better' ratings)

1.	Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes	45.6
2.	Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study	34.8
3.	Loans services	26.3
4.	Assistance from library staff	25.6
5.	Interlibrary loans services	11.9
6.	Journal and newspaper collections	10.4
8.	Photocopying facilities	6.4
8.	Audiovisual collections	5.3
9.	Reference collections	5.1
10.	Computer facilities and services	4.1
11.	Provision of materials for course related and study purposes	4.1

(b) Ranking on the basis of percentages of respondents who considered public library services at least 'as good' as academic library services (i.e. the sum of 'much better','better' and 'as good' ratings)

1.	Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes	73.4
2.	Loans services	72.5
3.	Assistance from library staff	67.8
4.	Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study	67.1
5.	Interlibrary loans services	29.9
6.	Journal and newspaper collections	24.4
7.	Reference collections	24.1
8.	Photocopying facilities	23.8
9.	Provision of materials for course related and study purposes	10.9
10.	Audiovisual collections	10.2
11.	Computer facilities and services	9.6

TABLE 107 (Cont'd)

(c) **Ranking on the basis of percentages of negative ratings (i.e. the sum of 'inferior' and 'greatly inferior' ratings)** (arranged from least to greatest)

1.	Loans services	14.1
2.	Interlibrary loans services	14.3
3.	Provision of materials for recreationat and leisure purposes	15.6
4.	Provision of materials for general interest/ information unrelated to study	26.2
5.	Assistance from library staff	28.6
6.	Audiovisual collections	59.9
7.	Journal and newspaper collections	62.5
8.	Computer facilities and services	62.6
9.	Reference collections	68.2
10.	Photocopying facilities	68.5
11.	Provision of materials for course related and study purposes	84.8

(d) **Ranking on the basis of percentages of positive ratings (i.e. the sum of 'much better' and 'better' ratings), but with 'undecided / no opinion' responses deleted**

1.	Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes	51.2
2.	Provision of materials for general interest/ information unrelated to study	37.3
3.	Loans services	30.4
4.	Interlibrary loans services	26.9
5.	Assistance from library staff	26.6
6.	Journal and newspaper collections	12.0
7.	Audiovisual collections	7.5
8.	Photocopying facilities	6.9
9.	Computer facilities and services	5.7
10.	Reference collections	5.5
11.	Provision of materials for course related and study purposes	4.3

TABLE 107 (Cont'd)

(e) Ranking on the basis of percentages of respondents who considered public library services at least 'as good ' as academic library services (i.e. the sum of 'much better', 'better' and 'as good' ratings), but with 'undecided / no opinion' responses deleted

1.	Loans services	83.7
2.	Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes	82.4
3.	Provision of materials for general interest/ information unrelated to study	72.0
4.	Assistance from library staff	70.4
5.	Interlibrary loans services	67.6
6.	Journal and newspaper collections	28.1
7.	Reference collections	26.1
8.	Photocopying facilities	25.7
9.	Audiovisual collections	14.5
10.	Computer facilities and services	13.3
11.	Provision of materials for course related and study purposes	11.4

In analysing the percentages given in the ranked data in Table 107, ratings are clearly divisible into two categories: strong positive (i.e. high positive / low negative) ratings; and strong negative (i.e. high negative / low positive) ratings. Percentagewise, the two categories are separated by a wide margin.

Strong positive ratings On the basis of ratings of public libraries at least 'as good' as those in academic libraries, five areas rated highly:

Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes

Loans services

Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study

Assistance from library staff

Interlibrary loans services

This pattern reinforces findings of Question 18 (See Section 4.562).

A word of explanation is needed for 'interlibrary loans services'. These rated much higher in percentage terms when 'undecided' responses were deleted (55.7% of respondents were 'undecided', probably having had no experience in using interlibrary loans services in either their academic or public libraries).

Overall, the two highest ratings were 'provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes' and 'loans services'.

The five top ranking services strongly reinforce the view of public libraries as sources of borrowing materials, primarily books, for recreational or general interest purposes. As revealed in this survey, students do use public libraries extensively, and use them as a valuable back up resource for study materials, but definitely see their primary role along traditional lines.

Strong negative ratings When compared with students' own academic libraries, the following six areas fared poorly, although the first three listed rated somewhat more highly than the last three:

Journal and newspaper collections

Reference collections

Photocopying facilities

Audiovisual collections

Computer facilities and services

Provision of materials for course related and study purposes

(a) Assistance from library staff

Assistance from library staff in public libraries rated highly, with 67.8% of respondents claiming it to be at least 'as good' as in academic libraries; 28.6% believed it to be 'inferior' or 'greatly inferior'; and 3.5% were undecided. (See Table 108).

TABLE 108: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF STAFF ASSISTANCE IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Much better	49	7.4
Better	120	18.2
As good	278	42.2
Inferior	161	24.5
Greatly inferior	27	4.1
No opinion / undecided	23	3.5
TOTAL	658	99.9

Missing cases = 373

When results were crosstabulated by educational institution, there were some noticeable differences in ratings between the institutions. Respondents from Swinburne I T were the most negative and the least positive, with 55.6% claiming staff assistance in public libraries was at least 'as good' as in their academic libraries; and 42.6% saying it was inferior. Undoubtedly, this reflects the very high positive ratings of the college library at Swinburne. The two universities were close in their ratings, with 65.7% from La Trobe University; and 69.6% from the University of Melbourne asserting that staff assistance in public libraries was at least 'as good' as in their university libraries; and 26.8% at each institution saying it was inferior. Comparable figures for Melbourne C A E were 74.4% positive and 24.4% negative ratings; and 75.0% and 21.5% respectively for Footscray I T. Results were significant statistically. (Chi square = 48.59529, df = 25, Significance = 0.0032, Cramer's V = 0.12294).

The only one of the other crosstabulations performed on this variable which yielded statistically significant and meaningful results was that on 'reasons for using the public library' - which revealed that respondents who used their public libraries for study purposes were more positive and less negative in their ratings of staff assistance in public libraries. 72.7% of those who used public libraries for course related purposes asserted that staff assistance was at least 'as good' as in their academic libraries; compared with 62.4% of those who used public libraries purely for recreational and / or general interest purposes. Only 24.5% of respondents using public libraries for study claimed staff assistance in public libraries was inferior to that in academic libraries; while 32.9% of those using public libraries only for recreational and / or general interest purposes, said so. Results were statistically significant at the 0.01 level. (Chi square = 44.33015, df = 25, Significance = 0.0100, Cramer's V = 0.11752).

(b) Provision of materials for course related / study purposes

Predictably, this was the most negatively rated of all the service areas in public libraries compared with those in academic libraries. Only 4.1% claimed better services in this area in their public libraries, and 10.9% services 'as good' as in their academic libraries. Perhaps these were students who were most disgruntled with services in their academic libraries, frustrated over the unavailability of library materials and the like. 84.8% gave 'inferior' or 'greatly inferior' ratings, while 4.3% were undecided.

TABLE 109: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PROVISION OF MATERIALS FOR COURSE RELATED / STUDY PURPOSES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Much better	12	1.8
Better	15	2.3
As good	45	6.8
Inferior	220	33.4
Greatly inferior	338	51.4
No opinion / undecided	28	4.3
TOTAL	658	100.0

Missing cases = 373

Although ratings from the five institutions were fairly close, students from Footscray I T and Melbourne C A E gave slightly higher ratings to public library provision of study materials than did those from the other three institutions. 24.4% from Footscray I T; and 14.8% from Melbourne C A E said public library services in this area were at least 'as good' as in their academic libraries; compared with 8.4% from La Trobe University; 7.5% from the University of Melbourne; and 6.4% from Swinburne I T. 'Inferior' and 'greatly inferior' ratings were assigned by 74.3% of Footscray I T respondents; compared with 83.9% from Melbourne C A E; 86.1% from La Trobe University; 87.9% from the University of Melbourne; and 88.2% from Swinburne I T. Note in both positive and negative figures, students from Swinburne I T were, by a small margin, the most disillusioned with this aspect of public library service. Observed differences were statistically significant. ((Chi square = 82.77986, df = 25, Signilicance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.16034).

No significant differences were revealed between ratings of part time and full time students. With level of course, both undergraduates and postgraduates assigned the same proportion of 'inferior' or 'greatly inferior' ratings (85.6%). However, undergraduates were more likely than postgraduates to give positive (i.e. at least 'as good') ratings (11.4% c.f. 5.2%); and less likely to be undecided (3.0% for undergraduates and 9.3% for postgraduates). (Chi square = 48.59712, df = 25, Significance = 0.0173, Cramer's V = 0.12266).

In the crosstabulation by year of course, first year students gave the highest positive ratings, with 18.0% claiming provision of materials for study purposes was at least 'as good' in public libraries as in academic libraries. In subsequent years, there were progressive decrements inpositive ratings: to 8.3% in second year; 4.8% in third year; and 4.0% in fourth year. Conversely, first year studer gave by far the lowest inferior ratings (77.1%), with increments in successive years: 86.4% in second year; 92.6% in third year; and 94.1% in fourth year. Results were statistically significant at the 0.05 level. (Chi square = 47.03756, df = 25, Significance = 0.0247, Cramer's V = 0.12040).

A similar trend was evident with increasing age, with younger students more likely to assign positive ratings than were older students - 15.6% of the under-twenties; c.f. 7.0% of those aged 20 - 24 years; 4.5% of those 25 -29 years; 10.6% of those in their thirties; 7.0% of those in their forties; and 0.0% for those in their fifties and sixties. (Chi square = 51.45156, df = 30, Significance = 0.0458, Cramer's V = 0.11477).

While the crosstabulation by field of subject specialisation did yield statistically significant results (Chi square = 77.21097, df = 45, Significance = 0.0208, Cramer's V = 0.14081), no definite trends were evident in the data. The most noteworthy feature was the significantly lower inferior ratings assigned by students of education and management and, interestingly, computing: 72.8%; 77.9% and 79.0% respectively. Other ratings varied between 82.0 and 92.9%.

As would be expected, those who did use public libraries for study needs gave higher ratings of the quality of provision of materials for course related purposes than did those who used public libraries only for recreational and / or general interest purposes. 15.1% of those who used the public library for some of their study materials rated its provision of course materials at least 'as good' as their academic libraries; compared with 4.7% of those who used public libraries purely for recreation and / or general interest. 83.4% of those using public libraries for study considered them inferior to academic libraries in this respect; 1.6% were undecided. The comparable figures for those using public libraries for recreation and / or general interest were 87.1% of inferior ratings, and 8.2% undecided. (Chi square = 81.67374, df = 25, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.15951).

(c) Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study

Provision of materials for general interst / information unrelated to study was one of the service areas in which public libraries excelled in the view of respondents. 67.1% considered public libraries were at least 'as good' as academic libraries in this field; 26.2% considered them inferior; and 6.8% were undecided - as outlined in Table 110.

TABLE 110: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PROVISION OF MATERIALS FOR GENERAL INTEREST / INFORMATION UNRELATED TO STUDY IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY /COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Much better	44	6.8
Better	182	28.0
As good	210	32.3
Inferior	144	22.2
Greatly inferior	26	4.0
No opinion / undecided	44	6.8
TOTAL	650	100.1

Missing cases = 381

Some variations in responses were evident between the five institutions: the differences were statistically significant (Chi square = 48.27238, df = 25, Significance = 0.0035, Cramer's V = 0.12330). Judging by students' evaluations, it seems that the larger university libraries provide more general interest materials than do the college libraries. 35.9% of La Trobe University respondents and 27.2% from the University of Melbourne claimed public libraries were inferior to their university libraries in the provision of general interest materials; compared with 23.7% from Melbourne C A E; 22.9% from Swinburne I T; and 19.5% from Footscray I T. Public libraries were at least 'as good' as academic libraries in the provision of materials for general interest, according to 53.4% of respondents from La Trobe University; 66.0% from the University of Melbourne; 69.8% from Swinburne I T; 72.5% from Melbourne C A E; and 75.6% from Footscray I T.

The only other crosstabulation of this variable to yield any meaningful results was that by 'reasons for using public libraries'. Consistent with the trend identified in earlier questions, those who used public libraries for some of their study resources gave more positive evaluations (and fewer negative ones) of public libraries with respect also to their 'provision of materials for 'general interest / information unrelated to study ' than did those who used public libraries purely for recreational and / or general interest purposes. Omitting 'undecided' responses, 74.9% of those using public libraries for course related purposes rated the quality of provision of general interest materials in public libraries at least 'as good' as in their academic libraries, while 25.1% considered them inferior. Comparable figures for those who used public libraries solely for recreational and / or general interest purposes, were 67.9% and 32.1% respectively. Results in the original table were highly significant (Chi square = 49.92667, df = 25, Significance = 0.0022, Cramer's V = 0.12530).

(d) Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes

Obviously, respondents viewed the primary function of public libraries as the provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes. In the ranked data, this topped the list of services - almost three quarters of respondents (73.4%) asserted that public libraries were better or 'as good' as academic libraries in this respect. Only 15.6% regarded them as inferior; while 10.9% were undecided. (See Table111).

TABLE 111: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PROVISION OF MATERIALS FOR RECREATIONAL / LEISURE PURPOSES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Much better	92	14.1
Better	205	31.5
As good	181	27.8
Inferior	83	12.7
Greatly inferior	19	2.9
No opinion / undecided	71	10.9
TOTAL	651	99.9

Missing cases = 380

The crosstabulation by educational institution marginally fell outside the required 0.05 level of significance. (Significance = 0.0709). Results for the five institutions were very close. The only exception was La Trobe University, with a much lower incidence of 'as good' ratings for

public libraries - 64.9%, compared with a range of 72.1% - 77.3% for the other four institutions. Perhaps La Trobe University provides more for recreational interests than do the other institutions. Other crosstabulations failed to produce any definite trends.

(e) Reference collections

As was expected, reference collections in public libraries rated poorly in comparison with academic libraries. Only 5.1% of respondents considered them better, and 19.0% 'as good'. 68.2% rated them as inferior; while 7.7% were undecided. (See Table 112).

TABLE 112: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF REFERENCE COLLECTIONS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Much better	14	2.2
Better	19	2.9
As good	124	19.0
Inferior	299	45.9
Greatly inferior	145	22.3
No opinion / undecided	50	7.7
TOTAL	651	100.0

Missing cases = 380

Significant variations in ratings were observed between the five institutions (Chi square = 64.68954, df = 25, Significance = 0.0000, Cramer's V = 0.14252). The universities recorded a higher incidence of 'inferior' and 'greatly inferior' ratings than did the three colleges, presumably attributable to their more extensive collections of reference materials. 75.7% of respondents at La Trobe University; and 72.1% from the University of Melbourne claimed public libraries were inferior in this respect; compared with 65.1% from Swinburne I T; 62.8% from Melbourne C A E; and 52.6% from Footscray I T. The significantly lower ratings from Footscray I T in particular would appear to reflect a relatively low level of resourcing for library services in comparison with the other institutions.

While no significant variations were observed in crosstabulations by mode of study, and field of subject specialisation, that by level of course was statistically significant. (Chi square = 37.86275, df = 25, Significance = 0.0477, Cramer's V = 0.10878). This showed that undergraduate students were more likely than were postgraduates to say that reference collections in public libraries were at least 'as good' as those in their academic libraries (25.7%

for undergraduates; c.f. 16.3% for postgraduates); and were less inclined to give 'interior' or 'greatly inferior' ratings (66.0% for undergraduates; c.f. 78.6% for postgraduates).

Year of course had a strong effect on ratings. First year students gave the highest positive ratings, with progressive decrements in subsequent years; and also the lowest interior ratings, with increments in each additional year of course. 33.4% of respondents in the first year of their courses claimed reference collections in public libraries were at least 'as good' as those in their academic libraries; compared with21.7% of second years; 13.2% of third years; and 16.7% of fourth years. Inferior ratings were assigned by 61.1% of first year students; 68.1% of second years; 76.9% of third years; and 79.1% of fourth years. These are differences which are highly significant in statistical terms. (Chi square = 45.92867, df = 25, Significance = 0.0065, Cramer's V = 0.11971).

A similar trend was observed with increasing age: amongst older respondents, there were fewer positive ratings, and an increase in 'undecided' responses. While 35.3% of the under-twenties claimed public library reference collections were at least 'as good' as those in their academic libraries, only 19.1% of those aged 20 - 24 years; 21.1% of those 25 -29 years; 18.5% of those in their thirties; 18.9% of those in their forties; and 0.0% of those in their fifties, said so. Results were significant statistically. (Chi square = 47.88140, df = 30, Significance = 0.0204, Cramer's V = 0.12204).

'Reasons for using public libraries' was another crosstabulation yielding statistically significant variations. (In the original table, Chi square = 41.94111, df = 25, Significance = 0.0182, Cramer's V = 0.11484). As in other crosstabulations by this variable, those using public libraries for course related purposes were more inclined to give positive evaluations than were those who did not use public libraries for study purposes. When 'undecided' responses were omitted, 29.3% of those using public libraries for study purposes claimed that reference collections in public libraries were at least 'as good' as those in their academic libraries; while 70.7% believed them inferior. Proportions for those using public libraries solely for recreational and / or general interest purposes were 20.3% and 79.7% respectively.

(f) Journal and newspaper collections

In the ratings, public library journal and newspaper collections fared only a little better than did reference collections in public libraries, also suffering greatly in comparison with academic libraries. 10.4% of respondents considered public library journal and newspaper collections better than their academic library equivalents; and 14.4% 'as good'. As indicated in some respondents' 'Other comments', this may be attributable more to the fact that journals are available for loan than to the size or nature of the collections in public libraries. 62.5% of respondents assigned inferior ratings; and 13.1% were undecided. Table 113 outlines the frequencies data for these ratings.

The crosstabulation by educational institution failed to satisfy requirements of statistical significance (Significance = 0.1635). Results for all five institutions were very close - a range of 59.5% - 65.0% in interior ratings. The only noteworthy feature of the table is that respondents from Footscray I T gave proportionately higher ratings to public libraries than did those from the other institutions: 34.2% from Footscray I T said public library journal and newspaper collections were at least 'as good' as their college library; compared with a range of 19.8% - 24.7% for the other four institutions.

The only one of the other crosstabulations performed on this variable which yielded statistically significant results was that by year of course, which had a noticeable impact on ratings. First year students were much more likely to assign positive ratings and less likely to give negative ones than those in subsequent years of a course. While 32.7% of first year students regarded public library journal and newspaper collections at least 'as good' as those in their academic libraries, only 21.8% of second years; 14.1% of third years; and 18.3% of fourth years, did so. Inferior ratings were lowest in first year, at 54.6%; but increased to 62.4% insecond year; 75.2% in third year; and 69.4% in fourth year. Results were well within the required 0.05 level of significance. (Chi square = 38.90398, df = 25, Significance = 0.0377, Cramer's V = 0.11096).

TABLE 113: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF JOURNAL AND NEWSPAPER COLLECTIONS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Much better	20	3.1
Better	47	7.3
As good	90	14.0
Inferior	251	39.1
Greatly inferior	150	23.4
No opinion / undecided	84	13.1
TOTAL	642	100.0

Missing cases = 389

(g) Audiovisual collections

Audiovisual collections were one of the lowest rating service areas in public libraries in comparison with their academic library counterparts, as demonstrated in Table 114. Only 10.2% of respondents considered public library audiovisual collections to be at least 'as good' as those in academic libraries. 59.9% viewed them as inferior. A significant proportion of respondents (29.9%) were undecided, which suggests they had not used audiovisual materials in public libraries and / or in their academic libraries.

TABLE 114: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF AUDIOVISUAL COLLECTIONS IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Much better	12	2.0
Better	20	3.3
As good	30	4.9
Inferior	206	33.8
Greatly inferior	159	26.1
No opinion / undecided	182	29.9
TOTAL	609	100.0

Missing cases = 422

Interestingly, the crosstabulation by educational institution revealed a different spread of results than in previous tables. With most other service areas, e.g. reference collections, university libraries were obviously better endowed, judging by the higher incidence of 'inferior' or 'greatly inferior' ratings assigned to public library collections. However, it appears here that the colleges place more emphasis on audiovisual services than do the universities. Only 52.8% of respondents from the University of Melbourne; and 53.4% from La Trobe University regarded audiovisual collections in public libraries as inferior, compared with 65.4% of respondents from Swinburne I T; 68.9% from Melbourne C A E; and 74.1% from Footscray I T. While Footscray I T and Melbourne C A E overall seem the most poorly resourced of the five institutions, in the audiovisual area, they appear to have the best collections. (Chi square = 51.16812, df = 25, Significance = 0.0015, Cramer's V = 0.13126)

In the crosstabulation by mode of study, full time students were slightly more inclined to assign inferior ratings than were part timers, and less likely to be 'undecided'. However, results failed to reach the 0.05 significance level (Significance = 0.13126). All other crosstabulations also failed to yield any meaningful results.

(h) Computer facilities and services

As one of the lowest ranking service areas, computer facilities and services in public libraries seem to be very poorly developed, compared with those in academic libraries. Many respondents' 'Other comments' indicated such facilities were non-existent in their public libraries. Only 9.6% of respondents considered public libraries at least 'as good' as academic libraries in this respect, while 62.6% rated them as inferior. A high percentage of respondents (27.7%) ticked the 'no opinion / undecided' option, obviously lacking experience in the use of such services in their public and / or academic libraries. (See Table 115).

TABLE 115: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF COMPUTER FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Much better	14	2.3
Better	11	1.8
As good	33	5.5
Inferior	183	30.3
Greatly inferior	195	32.3
No opinion / undecided	167	27.7
TOTAL	603	99.9

Missing cases = 428

Results

The crosstabulation by educational institution suggests a similar situation to that pertaining to audiovisual collections, i.e. Footscray I T and Melbourne C A E, which in most areas have appeared poorly resourced in comparison with the other institutions, seem to be slightly better off with regard to computer facilities and services. 71.2% of respondents from Footscray I T; and 67.6% from Melbourne C A E rated public library computer services as inferior to those in their academic libraries: compared with 62.8% from the University of Melbourne; 59.8% from Swinburne I T; and 57.2% from La Trobe University. However, as results failed to meet the requirements of tests of statistical significance at the 0.05 level. (Significance = 0.1275), the possibility that these are chance variations cannot be ruled out.

With mode of study, full timers were less inclined than were part timers to give positive ratings (6.5% c.f. 10.6% respectively); more inclined to rate public library computer facilities as inferior (66.7% c.f. 52.3%); and less likely to be undecided (22.8% c.f. 41.2%). This may be attributable to full time students having greater opportunity than part timers to utilise computer facilities and services in libraries. Differences here were statistically significant. (Chi square = 24.19993, df = 10, Significance = 0.0071, Cramer's V = 0.14260).

Age group was the only one of the other variables upon which crosstabulations were performed to generate meaningful results. Here there was a tendency towards less positive ratings and more 'undecided' responses with increasing age: 12.3% of the under-twenties; 9.7% of those in their twenties; 6.2% of those in their thirties; 5.6% of those in their forties; and 0.0% of those in their fifties or sixties believed computer facilities and services in public libraries to be at least 'as good' as their counterparts in academic libraries. Only 16.3% of the under-twenties were undecided; compared with 27.7% of those in their twenties; 34.6% of those in their thirties; 44.4% of those in their forties; 66.7% of those in their fifties; and 100.0% of those in their sixties. Results were highly significant. (Chi square = 61.87765, df = 30, Significance = 0.0005, Cramer's V = 0.14422).

(i) Photocopying facilities

Photocopying was another area in which public libraries rated poorly in comparison with academic libraries. Only 6.4% of respondents considered photocopying facilities in their public libraries to be better than in their academic libraries; and 17.4% to be 'as good'. 68.5% said they were inferior, while 7.8% were undecided. (See Table 116).

TABLE 116: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PHOTOCOPYING FACILITIES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Much better	19	3.0
Better	22	3.4
As good	112	17.4
Inferior	258	40.0
Greatly inferior	184	28.5
No opinion / undecided	50	7.8
TOTAL	645	100.1

Missing cases = 386

Statistically significant variations in ratings were observed between the five institutions. (Chi square = 63.92517, df = 25, Significance = 0.0003, Cramer's V = 0.14234). Ratings would suggest that photocopying facilities in the two universities are superior to those in the colleges. 78.1% of respondents from La Trobe University; and 72.7% from the University of Melbourne claimed that photocopying facilities in their public libraries were inferior to those in their academic libraries; compared with 66.3% of respondents from Melbourne C A E; 64.5% from Swinbume I T; and a low 52.6% from Footscray I T. Only 11.5% of respondents from La Trobe University; and 19.4% from the University of Melbourne viewed photocopying facilities in their public libraries as at least 'as good' as those in their academic libraries; while 25.1% from Swinbume I T; 29.9% from Melboume C A E; and 41.1% from Footscray I T, did so.

Statistically significant differences emerged between the ratings of full time and part time students, with full timers being less likely to say public library photocopying facilities were 'as good' as those in their academic libraries (22.2% c.f. 27.0%); more likely to give inferior ratings (72.7% c.f. 58.1%); and less inclined to be undecided than were part timers (5.2% c.f. 14.4%). (Chi square = 26.40554, df = 10, Significance = 0.0094, Cramer's V = 0.14385).

Although the crosstabulation by level of course revealed similar positive ratings for undergraduate and postgraduate students (with 23.1% and 24.2%, respectively, saying that photocopying facilities in public libraries were at least 'as good' as those in academic libraries), undergraduates were slightly more inclined to give inferior ratings (70.0% c.f. 63.6%); and were less likely to be undecided than were postgraduates (6.9% c.f. 12.1%). Results for the orginal table, from which this data was condensed, were highly significant. (Chi square = 61.18579, df = 25, Significance = 0.0007, Cramer's V = 0.13893).

Apart from the crosstabulation by 'reasons for using public libraries' which showed that those using public libraries for study purposes were slightly more inclined to give positive ratings to public library photocopying facilities than were those who used public libraries solely for recreational and / or general interest purposes (a pattern consistent with other crosstabulations of this variable), none of the other crosstabulations revealed any meaningful trends.

(j) Loans services

Next to the provision of materials for recreational / leisure purposes, loans services were the most highly rated services in public libraries, with almost three quarters of respondents (72.5%) rating them as least 'as good' as their academic libraries. Only 14.1% claimed they were inferior. 13.3% were undecided. (See Table 117).

TABLE 117: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF LOANS SERVICES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBEn	PERCENTAGE
Much better	37	5.7
Better	133	20.6
As good	298	46.2
Inferior	67	10.4
Greatly inferior	24	3.7
No opinion / undecided	86	13.3
TOTAL	645	99.9

Missing cases = 386

More positive ratings were made by college students than by university students. 81.8% of respondents from Melbourne C A E; 80.5% from Footscray I T; and 73.8% from Swinburne I T considered public library loans services to be at least 'as good' as those in academic libraries; compared with 69.1% from the University of Melbourne; and 66.4% from La Trobe University. Inferior ratings were assigned by only 10.4% of Melbourne C A E respondents; 11.2% from Swinburne I T; and 12.2% from Footscray I T; but by 16.1% from the University of Melbourne; and 16.8% from La Trobe University. Results were statistically significant (Chi square = 39.03895, df = 25, Significance = 0.0365, Cramer's V = 0.11133).

No noticeable variations were evident in corsstabulations by mode of study, year of course, age group, or field of subject specialisation.

The crosstabulation by level of course revealed that undergraduates were more likely than postgraduates to give positive ratings to loans services in public libraries: 75.4% of undergraduates claimed public library loans services were at least 'as good' as those of their academic libraries, compared with 59.2% of postgraduates. Conversely, inferior ratings were lower amongst undergraduates than postgraduates (13.5% c.f. 17.3%). Postgraduates had a much higher incidence of 'undecided' reponses - 23.5%; compared with 11.1% amongst undergraduate respondents. This data has been condensed from the original table, which was highly significant, statistically speaking. (Chi square = 46.71533, df = 25, Significance = 0.0053, Cramer's V = 0.12139).

Respondents using public libraries for course related purposes were much more likely to give positive ratings to public library loans services, and less inclined to give negative ones, than those who used their public libraries purely for recreational and / or general interest purposes. When 'undecided' responses were deleted, 87.9% of those who used public libraries for study rated public libraries loans services at least 'as good' as their academic library counterparts; 12.1% believed them inferior. In comparison, 77.1% of those using public libraries only for recreation and /or general interest considered public library loans services at least equal to academic library loans services; while 22.9% claimed they were inferior.

(k) Interlibrary loans services

The most striking aspect of the frequencies data presented in Table 118 is the high number of 'undecided' responses - over half of respondents (55.7%) were not in a position to comment on the relative quality of interlibrary loans services in public and academic libraries, presumably because of lack of experience with them. 29.9% believed interlibrary loans services in public libraries to be at least 'as good' as those in academic libraries; while 14.3% considered them inferior. When 'undecided' ratings are excluded, this translates into a 67.6% positive, and a 32.4% negative rating of interlibrary loans services in public libraries, a quite strong positive rating.

Some variations were evident in figures for the five tertiary institutions. Results were statistically significant (Chi square = 44.73498, df = 25, Significance = 0.0090, Cramer's V = 0.12685). On the basis of proportions of 'undecided' ratings, it would appear that college students make greater use of interlibrary loans services than do university students; and that amongst college students, Melbourne C A E and Footscray I T are the greatest users. 64.0% of respondents from La Trobe University; and 61.0% from the University of Melbourne were 'undecided'; compared with 55.8% from Swinburne I T; 46.0% from Footscray IT; and 38.0% from Melbourne C A E. Melbourne C A E recorded the greatest percentage of positive ratings with 45.1% of respondents claiming interlibrary loans services in public libraries were at least 'as good' as in academic libraries; followed by Footscray I T with 38.3%; Swinburne I T with 27.4%; 26.0% for La Trobe University; and 24.8% for the University of Melbourne. A couple of observations can be made on the basis of these results. One concerns the low incidence of awareness of interlibrary loans in either respondents' own academic libraries or other types of libraries. Because of this lack of awareness, university undergraduates in particular, who generally are not permitted access to interlibrary loans in their own institutions, also are not using the service in public libraries to any degree. The other observation concerns the need to seek out alternative sources of supply of study materials due to inadequacies in the student's own academic library collection. Respondents from the better resourced

institutions with more extensive general collections appear to have less need to seek out alternative sources of supply, such as using interlibrary loans services through public libraries.

TABLE 118: RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF INTERLIBRARY LOANS SERVICES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE IN UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE LIBRARIES

RATING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Much better	19	3.3
Better	49	8.6
As good	103	18.0
Inferior	59	10.3
Greatly inferior	23	4.0
No opinion / undecided	318	55.7
TOTAL	571	99.9

Missing cases = 460

The only other crosstabulation to generate any meaningful results was that by year of course, which showed that first year students were much more likely to assign positive ratings and less likely to give negative ones than were those in subsequent years. In succeeding years, there were progressive decrements in positive ratings and increments in negative ones. While 37.7% of first years said interlibrary loans services were at least 'as good' in their public libraries as in their academic libraries, only 29.2% of second years; 21.1% of third years; 22.2% of fourth years; 7.7% of fifth years; and 0.0% of sixth years, said so. Inferior ratings were assigned by 12.2% of first years; 12.3% of second years; 15.5% of third years; 24.5% of fourth years; 23.1% of fifth years; and 75.0% of sixth years. Increasingly negative ratings in fourth, fifth and sixth years in particular are likely to be attributable to university students having access to efficient interlibrary loans services in their own institutions, hence having less need to use such services in public libraries. The results were statistically significant. (Chi square = 51.72875, df = 25, Significance = 0.0013, Cramer's V = 0.13580).

(l) 'Other' services.

Although the 'Other services' option was ticked by seven respondents, the only service area specified was 'study area'. Most comments given here were elaborations on earlier points, rather than a listing of new ones.

4.58 Attitudes of staff in public libraries towards students

In Question 21, students were asked: 'When public library staff realise you are a tertiary student, are they:

(1) Very helpful, going out of their way to help you
(2) Reasonably helpful
(3) Not very helpful
(4) Very unhelpful, perhaps suggesting that you use your university or college library instead'.

As many respondents pointed out, there was one major problem with this question: the situation alluded to may never have arisen in the experience of many tertiary students, i.e. public library staff may be totally unaware of the student status of public library members. Comments such as the following highlighted this problem:

'They don't know I'm a tertiary student.'

'I don't tell them.'

'I never announce myself.'

'They are yet to find out.'

'The fact that I am a tertiary student does not become apparent since I do not use the public library for course related purposes.'

'If I need help from a librarian, I ask, but I don't state "I am a student" .'

'The public library staff are always helpful, and the fact that I am a tertiary student makes no difference.'

Undoubtedly, this explains the higher than usual non-response rate for the question.

Allegations of brusque treatment of students by some public librarians prompted inclusion of such a question. With rapidly shrinking budgets, and severe staffing and materials shortages, many public librarians have abrogated any responsibility towards serving the course needs of tertiary students, arguing that their primary responsibility is to serve those with no other point of access to the library network. Naturally, many public librarians show resentment against what they perceive as unfair and unrealistic demands made by tertiary students on public libraries. The question sought to explore this problem from the tertiary student's viewpoint.

As portrayed in **Table 119**, responses were overwhelmingly positive, with 87.3% of respondents giving favourable ratings of the helpfulness of public library staff, and only 12.7% complaining staff were unhelpful. This strongly reinforces findings of the high positive ratings of the quality of staff assistance in public libraries presented in Sections 4.562 (a) and 4.572(a). However, the 12.7% of respondents represent 66 students who felt dissatisfied with this aspect of public library service.

TABLE 119: RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF ATTITUDES TOWARDS STUDENTS

DEGREE OF PERCEIVED HELPFULNESS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Very helpful	100	19.2
Reasonably helpful	355	68.1
Not very helpful	42	8.1
Very unhelpful	24	4.6
TOTAL	521	100.0

Missing cases = 510

No meaningful results emerged in crosstabulations by mode of study, year of course, age or field of subject specialisation.

With educational institution, Melbourne C A E respondents gave the lowest level of positive ratings (i.e. 'very helpful' and 'reasonably helpful'), at 78.5%, and, conversely, the highest level of negative ratings - 21.4%. The University of Melbourne and Swinburne I T both recorded ratings of 85.8% positive and 14.2% negative. La Trobe University and Footscray I T respondents recorded the highest level of positive ratings and the lowest negative ones: 92.1% and 7.1%; and 94.4% and 5.6% respectively. One wonders why Melbourne C A E students were the most disillusioned with staff attitudes in public libraries, when they, along with Footscray I T students, were the greatest users of public libraries (See Section 4.34), and the heaviest users of public libraries for course related and study purposes (See Section 4.52). Results were statistically significant. (Chi square = 30.25223, df = 25, Significance = 0.0110, Crainer's V = 0.14062).

In the crosstabulation by level of course, undergraduates were slightly more likely to give favourable ratings of staff attitudes in public libraries and less likely to give negative ones than were postgraduates. 88.0% of undergraduates gave positive ratings, and 12.0% negative; compared with 80.6% and 19.4% for postgraduates. Results were significant at the 0.05 level. (Chi square = 25.73263, df = 15, Significance = 0.0409, Cramer's V = 0.12956).

However, the most interesting of the crosstabulations performed on this variable was that by 'quality of services in public libraries overall' (Question 17, See Section 4.561). The data is reproduced in **Table 120**. Results were highly significant in statistical terms. As demonstrated in the Table, perceived attitudes of staff helpfulness had a strong impact on evaluation of the quality of services in public libraries overall. Negative personal experiences with uncooperative staff correlated highly with 'poor' or 'very poor' ratings of service overall. Library staff need to be mindful of this in their interactions with clients. Of respondents who rated the overall quality of public library services as 'very good', 98.6% viewed library staff as 'very helpful' or 'reasonably helpful'; and only 1.4% as unhelpful. With 'good' ratings, there was a 93.4% positive and 6.7% negative evaluation of staff attitudes. For 'average' ratings, 83.5% found staff helpful, and 16.5% unhelpful. Of those who regarded library services overall as 'poor', 75.8% saw library staff as at least 'reasonably helpful', and 24.2% as

unhelpful. With those who considered the quality of public library services overall as 'very poor', only 47.3% saw library staff as helpful, and 52.7% as unhelpful. In Table 120, note the rapid fall in the proportion of 'very helpful' responses with declining ratings of the quality of public library services overall.

TABLE 120: RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF ATTITUDES TOWARDS STUDENTS BY RATINGS OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES OVERALL

RATING OF OVERALL QUALITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES	PERCEIVED ATTITUDES OF PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF TOWARDS STUDENTS				TOTAL	
	Very helpful	Reasonably helpful	Not very helpful	Very unhelpful	%	No.
Very good	49.3	49.3	-	1.4	100.0	71
Good	22.1	71.3	4.6	2.1	100.1	195
Average	8.8	74.7	9.8	6.7	100.0	194
Poor	6.1	69.7	21.2	3.0	100.1	33
Very poor	10.5	36.8	31.6	21.1	100.0	19

N = 512

Missing cases = 519

4.6 'Other comments'

Approximately four hundred respondents took the opportunity to give 'other comments' at the end of the questionnaire, evidence of the high degree of concern amongst tertiary students over library services and facilities. As one student concluded: *'Thank you for asking for my opinion. I hope I've been of help, and some major changes occur to improve our libraries, as they are a major part of my, and other students', lives.'*

'Other comments' were invaluable in the data analysis phase, providing further insights and clarifying aspects of the frequencies and crosstabulation data.

Comments clustered around four broad areas:

(1) **Students' own university or college libraries** - both positive comments and negative evaluations of problem areas, difficulties encountered, and suggestions for improving services.

(2) **Public library services** - again, an overall evaluation of service provision, problem areas, and suggestions for new or improved services, but with particular emphasis on the relative roles of academic and public libraries in students' lives.

(3) **Other libraries** - particularly the State Library of Victoria and various special libraries.

(4) **The questionnaire** - questions causing difficulty, or explanations and elaborations of answers given earlier in the questionnaire.

4.61 Comments on university and college libraries

Comments fell broadly into three categories:

(a) General observations on academic library services

(b) Specific comments on library services at each institution

(c) Suggestions for improving services in university and college libraries

(a) General observations on academic library services

Before considering specific problem areas identified by students in individual libraries, it is worth highlighting some of the most pervasive issues raised, to a greater or lesser degree, by students from all institutions. Some points which are developed further in relation to particular institutions in Part (b) of this Section are treated summarily here, while others are discussed at greater length.

Major problem areas:

(1) **Ageing library collections** Many respondents raised the issue of lack of up to date materials in their libraries, both books and serials - whether this is due primarily to drastic cuts in materials budgets, resulting in, for example, mass cancellations of serial titles in libraries, or to mounting cataloguing backlogs, or both, is unclear. Whatever the case, this is a serious issue which must throw into doubt the ability of some academic libraries to service adequately the range of courses taught in their institutions, and, in turn, reaccreditation of many of the existing courses.

Results

(2) **Unavailability of high demand titles at the times they are needed** No institution was exempt from the perennial complaint of failure to provide sufficient copies of a title to keep pace with student demands. As one respondent observed: *'It is the degree of demand for material that at times makes such material virtually inaccessible when it is needed most.'* The sheer frustration of students unable to locate a vital reference is vividly portrayed in the following comment: *'It takes so much time unless you are completely familiar with a library to find anything. Then someone's usually borrowed the bloody thing or you're not allowed to.'*

With a rapidly contracting resource base, it appears that the only way academic libraries can handle this problem is by a greater reliance on Closed Reserve collections, placing increasing proportions of library materials in such collections. As relatively few students can complete the required reading in the limited loans period of two or three hours, they are relying more and more on photocopying, and are spending considerable sums of money, not to mention time spent standing in photocopying queues, in the process. Photocopying facilities, particularly in the colleges, are stretched to the limit. An inevitable corollary of this is the widespread flouting of copyright laws.

Apart from the escalating incidence of photocopying, respondents indicated several other methods they used to cope with the increasing problem of unavailability of titles. For some of the more affluent, it was a matter of buying more texts, in preference to using other sources of supply. One respondent said:

'...I probably not the best person to complete this questionnaire as I have invested in a large number of expensive course text books. I buy $50 -$60 worth of text books a month, which is usually more than I can read, so my use of library materials has been limited.'

Some other comments:

'I don't use libraries - I buy books - it's easier.'

'I tend to buy books I wish to read rather than using libraries. The vast majority of my course related information is in text books any way.'

'Because of the difficulties in physically getting to the library, I tend to buy major prescribed texts.' [a sentiment expressed by many part timers].

Others had devised less expensive means of procuring materials for prescribed reading, through the use of cooperative arrangements amongst groups of students. This took one of three forms:

(i) **cooperative purchasing arrangements** amongst a number of friends

(ii) **a liberal sharing of personal libraries** amongst friends

(iii) **groups of students from different tertiary institutions who borrow in an organised way for their friends** - like an unofficial reciprocal borrowing arrangement, but which avoids all the red tape and restrictions. This was used particularly by groups of students residing together in residential colleges, hostels or flats. As one student admitted:

> *'To date I have been using Chisholm Caulfield extensively . . . close friends attending the College borrow books for me, as I do at Melbourne Uni. for them - it's a lot less hassle, we feel.'* And, another respondent:
>
> *'When I can't find the books I need at my College Library, I ask my friends to borrow books from their libraries (RMIT, La Trobe Uni., Melbourne Uni., Melbourne College, etc.), thereby having a wide use of tertiary libraries.'*

Apart from such options, the other obvious source of titles temporarily unavailable in the student's own academic library is to try other libraries, be they other tertiary libraries,

special libraries, public libraries, or school libraries, in a hope to track down the elusive item. This constitutes much of the student's course related usage of public libraries.

In borrowing items listed on recommended reading lists, part time students are severely disadvantaged, in that, by the time they can get to the Library in the evening, all available copies have been 'snapped up' by full timers. This is illustrated in the following comments:

'With so many tertiary students wanting the same books it is hard to get them, and especially when the only time to get them is at night.'

'As a part time student, I find that time is the greatest disadvantage, with books not available at the time I need them.'

'I have found it difficult to get the required text as the full time students hog the system. No one is organised to assist or aid part timers.'

(3) **Loans policies** Academic library loans policies constituted a major source of discontent. The major problems highlighted by respondents were:

(i) **Loans periods which are too short** and allow insufficient time to complete an item.

(ii) **The inconvenience of Reserve Desk arrangements** and attendant problems described under the last point. Some students resented the fact that they were unable to use Reserve materials in other tertiary libraries they used.

(iii) **Policies which discriminate against particular categories of users**, usually undergraduates, in terms of limited loans periods; materials unavailable for borrowing; eligibility for interlibrary loans or reciprocal borrowing; etc.

(4) **Interlibrary loans and reciprocal borrowing arrangements** Amongst respondents, there was a low incidence of awareness of interlibrary loans provisions, as evidenced in statements such as the following:

'I don't know what an inter library loan is, and I would not know how to go about getting one. Perhaps more information about this service is needed.'

'If inter-tertiary institution loans are possible, then why are we not made aware of this? I'm sure it would be very helpful.'

Of those who did have some idea of what an interlibrary loan was, there was resentment that such arrangements were not available to all students:

'I would find interlibrary loans very useful from institution to institution, but I've found this impossible in the past and library staff have never been keen to help an UNDERGRADUATE in this respect.'

'Interlibrary loans from Melbourne and Monash Unis were not available to me even when I showed them my La Trobe student card.' (This student seems to have confused interlibrary loans with reciprocal borrowing).

Some others who had used interlibrary loans complained of the slow and cumbersome nature of the process, and hence the limited value for most information needs:

'Interlibrary loans are usually too slow to be of any use.'

'As I live in a remote part of the State, by the time the books I have on loan arrive, it is time to send them back.'

Results

'I would appreciate a more obtainable method of interlibrary borrowing. The current system seems too time consuming. It would be helpful if when at another library . . . you could borrow a specific book you've found, then and there, not through having to refer back to your own library, and go through other channels . . . .'

While the uninitiated showed some interest in reciprocal borrowing, those who had used it, or had attempted to use it, had similar complaints about limitations on who was eligible or about restrictive conditions / red tape. Some examples:

'I would appreciate having a reciprocal borrowing scheme with the major institutions.'

'I tried to get a reciprocal membership at a college near home. The college concerned was agreeable but La Trobe Library would not allow (me) undergraduates this advantage. . . . I think it unfair that part time undergraduates cannot use reciprocal membership, especially when La Trobe is some distance from home.'

'My major complaint, and I'm sure it applies to many students who feel like me, is that we are terribly disappointed in the fact that because we attend Melbourne College, we are not permitted to borrow from . . . Melbourne Uni., which is next door to us. I only hope something is done about this problem in the near future.'

'I have never bothered with reciprocal borrowing because of the restrictions placed on it, especially the one month only validation. This should be for a full teaching year or at least one semester.'

(5) **Buildings and accommodation** Noise and distractions in study areas posed a problem at most institutions. In some cases, this was attributable to library design factors; in others to overcrowding or inadequate supervision of study areas. One student objected to the placement of study carrels adjacent to a main traffic thoroughfare to the bookstacks, finding the constant movement in and out of the bookstacks more distracting than conversation. Some complained of the lack of provision for different types of study facilities, e.g. quiet study areas and group discussion rooms. Inadequate ventilation, overheating and poor lighting were other problems highlighted. Provision of facilities for disabled students is another issue. As the following respondent remarked, access to parking facilities near the library is an essential precondition to library use.:

'As a disabled student, I 've found that parking close to tertiary institutions is a bit of a problem. Therefore, at times when I need to use another library's resources, I decide not to because of the parking situation.'

(6) **Photocopying facilities** With the rapidly increasing incidence of student photocopying, insufficient photocopiers was an oft-mentioned problem, especially in the colleges. Equipment breakdowns left unattended for long periods, placing heavier demands on the operational photocopiers, and resulting in long queues, was another cause of concern.

(7) **Inadequate hours of opening** Part timers in particular complained in some institutions of very limited opening hours, at times which made it virtually impossible for them to attend the library. University branch libraries and a couple of the colleges had problems in this regard. Saturday morning opening times as the only weekend opening hours were criticised, as many part time students with full time jobs do their shopping then. Others who wished to study or work on projects over major holiday periods, especially December to February were disadvantaged by restricted opening hours.

(8) **Bureaucratic processes** Some respondents, particularly those from the larger institutions, viewed librarians as uncooperative, even confrontationist, locked in to inflexible systems, rules and regulations, unprepared to adapt to provide a customised service tailored to individual needs.

(9) **User education** A number of students made comments pertaining to inadequate training in the use of library resources and facilities. Some felt swamped, not knowing where to start, intimidated by complex systems. Presumably, most of the students had been given an initial library orientation tour, but it appears this was insufficient, and not when they needed it most. The time when they were most receptive to instruction seemed to be when first attempting to identify library resources for a major assignment. Some requested ongoing instruction, according to their stage of development and needs at the time. (See Section 4.61 (c) (4) for comments).

(10) **Interaction of library staff with students** Although the vast majority of librarian - student interactions in tertiary libraries are of a pleasant, cooperative nature, the impact of negative encounters on subsequent library use, and on the reputation of the library amongst the student community should not be underestimated. While some students are prepared to make allowances, and accept that such experiences are a function of the individual personality rather than the library, this is not the case with all. Most users are totally unaware of the grossly inadequate staffing levels brought about by savage budget cuts, of the frayed nerves of overworked librarians. All they see is the encounter itself, and opinions they form can be lasting. The ensuing quotations provide much food for thought for academic librarians whose work involves them in regular interaction with students:

'Our library staff generally are very abrupt and after many bad experiences, my friends and I steer clear of them, working things out for ourselves.'

'I have found librarians from my [academic] library very rude, unhelpful and aggressive towards students; while local public library staff are just a bit better in the performance of their duty. Overall, I think librarians should learn how to deal with people, more than books.'

'At all libraries for some reason, I always feel too intimidated to go and ask for help. Librarians never seem too enthusiastic to help you.'

'The staff at the library seem unapproachable.'

'Some of the [academic] library staff give help grudgingly, and are sour and unfriendly. At my local library, the staff are pleasant and pleased to help - seeing this good-natured attitude as part of their job requirements probably.'

'I find public librarians . . . more helpful than the majority of librarians at the [academic] library.'

'Generally I find librarians have a tendency to be hysterical.' [!]

'I have found the State Library staff to be particularly helpful whilst [academic] library staff rather rude at times.'

'Some of the staff members at the _____ [academic] Library are unhelpful and snobbish.'

'One of my real concerns about libraries [is] . . . the sometimes ungratefully given help.'

'The _____ [academic] Library staff do not seem to know what you are talking about when you ask for assistance.'

'The librarians at _____ Public Library are very pleasant and helpful most of the time. By comparison, librarians at _____ [academic] Library are too impersonal, less polite and generally less helpful. Perhaps this is because of the much greater number of students wanting to be served.'

'The most pronounced difference in library staff attitudes seems to be that public library staff are "courting" their users - trying hard to encourage use of their library. Academic library staff have a "captive " user population who need their library; so staff in many cases appear to feel that they do not have to exert themselves to be pleasant and overly helpful to their users.'

'[Academic library] staff don't give very personalised service as they tend to treat you as one of the sheep. As this is the case in my opinion, I don't bother most of the time to ask for help. As the librarians gives instructions to you he / she rarely follows through with you, e.g. tells you how to find a reference, but doesn't show you step by step what to do, so as to know whether you are doing something correctly, so what he / she has said goes above your head.'

The findings of Kosa's[12], and of Hatchard and Toy 's[13] research on the 'psychological barrier' between library users and librarians (refered to in Chapter Two) are clearly supported by these students' statements.

(b) Specific comments on library services at each institution

(i) University of Melbourne

As would be expected, with so many respondents coming from the University of Melbourne, 'other comments' crossed all shades of the spectrum, from eulogies such as:

'The Baillieu is a wonderful library . . . superior to anything else available in Victoria.'

'Provision of course related and general interest books at Melbourne in excellent.'

'The libraries at Melboume are very good - they have good facilities, equipment and service.'

to negative evaluations, e.g. the following [tongue-in-cheek?] comment:

'The facilities at the University of Melboume are atrocious. There is obviously a bad joke being played on its users, as never in my entire life have I found a book I have needed materially existent on the shelves. Also, architecturally, it is non-functional, and depressing to the point that I have often left in a near-suicidal state!'

Judging by written comments, perhaps the greatest problem, especially amongst younger students, was the feeling of being overwhelmed by the sheer size and complexity of the

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12 Geza A. Kosa, 'The psychological barrier between college students and the librarian', *Australian academic & research libraries*, vol. 13, no. 2, June 1982, pp. 107-112.

13 Desmond B. Hatchard & Phyllis Toy, 'The psychological barriers between library users and library staff: an exploratory investigation', *Australian academic & research libraries*, vol. 17, no. 2, June 1986, pp. 63 - 69.

Baillieu Library and its systems, at the impersonality of a large, busy library, with its regulated procedures and businesslike operations. One first year student expressed it this way:

> *'Firstly, the University is so large that it is time wasting and difficult to find appropriate references .... Secondly, it is difficult to find a staff member in such a large library. Maybe more staff members are required to service so many students .... Thirdly, the atmosphere is quiet and dull. I'm well aware that a library is for study; however, such an atmosphere could possibly turn people off studying.'*

Some other comments:

> *'I find the Library at the Uni. is so big that when you are new to the place like I was, it is very difficult to know where to start looking for a book.'*
>
> *'_____ Library is easier to use than the Baillieu. The staff are more interested.'*
>
> *'The Uni. Library is too complex to be used effectively. More information on how and where to get a book is helpful.'*

However, this feeling was not restricted to the younger students. One respondent, aged 42, admitted:

> *'I am still rather uncertain about the University Library. I feel rather intimidated by staff and even by the students who seem at ease with the system. Perhaps a lot of this is to do with my mature age status.'*

Because of this, many students found solace in the smaller branch libraries scattered throughout the University - faculty and departmental libraries, and the Rowden White Library (a recreational library for students in the Students' Union Building), where there is more individual attention and help, as revealed in the following comments:

> *'I find the _____ Branch Library a much more attractive proposition than the Baillieu. . Library staff are more friendly here.'*
>
> *'I find the departmental libraries at Uni. very useful as quiet places for studying.'*
>
> *'My Faculty Library is very good with availability of course related books. Photocopying services are good, and staff are helpful.'*

One student extolled the virtues of the Brownless Medical Library, its staff and systems, then added' *unfortunately this library smells of formaldehyde.'*

One source of difficulty with the branch libraries, which was highlighted by part time students, was their restricted hours of opening, with little or no provision for after hours use, e.g. :

> *'The Brownless Medical Library is a good place to work. However, the most useful time for me to use it is at weekends, and it is only open on Saturday mornings.'*

A contrary view of the value of small branch libraries is presented in the following comment:

> *'There is a great deal to be said for centralised library systems. Having come from an excellent centralised system at Monash Uni. to the "hotch potch" of libraries and different borrowing systems at Melbourne Uni., I feel I can say this. The student's ability to research a topic is greatly enhanced and considerable duplication of resources and inefficiency is thus avoided.'*

Some other problems identified by respondents from the University of Melbourne:

(1) Inadequate ventilation and harsh lighting (See Section 4.43(e)).

Results

(2) Loans policies. Some students complained that a one week loans period was too short, and argued that longer loans periods should be introduced for materials not in high demand. One claimed: *"The length of time allowed for loans at the Uni. library is insufficient for most of my study needs.'* Others supported an extension of interlibrary loans privileges to undergraduates, or at least to those in the latter years of their degrees. A young undergraduate student complained: *'The University Library's policy has a bias against the use of the library by undergraduates, especially first and second year students.'*

(3) A lack of up to date materials in some areas, attributable either to resource constraints, or to cataloguing backlogs. One respondent wrote:

'University references are often out of date. That is, most recent books take a few years to find their way to our shelves.'

Another said:

'Journals in my area of study are not kept up to date.'

(4) Inadequate provision of multiple copies to cope with student demand, e.g.:

'I feel the borrowing period for a Reserve book, overnight loan, 4 p.m. to 9 a.m. is too short. Since these books are in such great demand because of their usefulness, I think multiple copies should be bought, with some retained for overnight borrowing only, and others released for longer periods.'

'Because some Arts subjects have such large enrolments, often there are up to 250 students chasing a single copy of various books. More multiple copies are needed.'

(5) Difficulties adjusting to new cataloguing systems, and the confusion and inconvenience of a split catalogue, e.g.:

'I find the catalogue system at the Uni. to be quite disorganised due to it being split between books before and after 1980, i.e. they are listed separately, which makes finding a book difficult and time consuming. As soon as possible, they should have it all on one computer system catalogue.'

(6) Insufficient or inappropriately timed user education programs. One respondent commended the Library on its range of materials, but claimed *' you have to do all the learning about the resources and how to use them yourself.'* A first year student experiencing some difficulty in tracking down relevant sources said:

'I don't think that the tour of the Library I went on was quite satisfactory.'

Another made the suggestion:

'Perhaps a tour and some guidance on how to use library resources would help.'

Possibly better publicity is needed to acquaint novice users with the user education programs that are currently available, or for undergraduate programs to be extended beyond the initial orientation phase. Several students who had attended the advanced user education programs the Baillieu offers in particular subject fields were delighted with the sessions, as expressed by this student:

'I have found very useful the seminars given by University staff on research methods as, prior to this time, I had been ignorant of the full range of bibliographies covering books and articles in a given subject area, as well as the existence of computer data base searches. Specific guides covering particular areas, e.g. law, politics, chemistry, have been invaluable as all important information has been encapsulated in accessible form.'

La Trobe University

In comparison with other institutions, relatively few respondents from La Trobe University made 'other comments' relating to their own library facilities. Of those who did, most were positive, e.g.:

> *'La Trobe University Library has an excellent environment to study in, with highly adequate facilities: resources, photocopiers, efficient loans and cataloguing systems, extremely helpful and efficient library assistants, and patrol staff who control talking levels in study areas.'*

> *'La Trobe has a really excellent library, better than some of the [other academic] libraries.'*

> *'Our Uni. library is great ,considering its relatively young age.'*

> *'The services offered at the Borchardt Library are, I consider, excellent. . . . The usage of OPAC computers greatly assists finding references.'*

Some students alluded to difficulties with procuring titles the University owned, e.g.:

> *'[Services are] excellent, except for a shortage of enough references to cater for all students.'*

Very short loans periods were opposed by some. One La Trobe respondent who worked part time at a College used its library facilities rather than La Trobe's, due to the longer loans period offered. The student said:*'Three day loans are next to useless, in my opinion.'*

A few complained of difficulties in borrowing course materials, as they were on 'Reserve' and subject to loans periods of a couple of hours. To quote one respondent:

> *'I guess the main problem with the University Library is that most, if not all, relevant course material is on "Reserve" , which means that borrowing time is restricted to a matter of hours. This time is inevitably insufficient. Thus photocopying is a significant and sometimes insurmountable expense. I realise that the theory behind this is that everyone is able to obtain important material, however, I have spent considerable sums (in excess of $10) just to photocopy essential items. Is there a better way?'*

A couple of students recounted incidents involving a 'rigid adherence to the rulebook' mentality, where they felt library staff had failed to adapt policies to accommodate individual needs. One asserted: *'I find La Trobe University Library staff unnecessarily bureaucratic.'*

Melbourne College of Advanced Education

Several students complimented Melbourne C A E on its resources and services, e.g.:

> *'I am satisfied with the MCAE Library as it provides a wide range of information which is up to date. The library staff are extremely helpful , showing you how to use resources to your benefit.'*

> *'The MCAE L ''rary has good resources and catalogue system.'*

> *'Hours of opening are very good.'*

Others had some complaints, in particular relating to:

(1) Inadequate levels of staffing, e.g.:

> *'I feel that my College library is understaffed. Books seem to take a while to chase up. I usually get them but not from the shelves. They are usually on numerous trolleys around the Library waiting to be shelved.'*

'Staff appear to be too busy for a lot of help, especially for instruction re. using indices.'

'I have a few problems with the College Library claiming I have not retur ned my books, and mounting fines to be paid or results withheld. Each time I have found these books on the shelves. . . .'

(2) Crowded, noisy study areas (See Section 4.43 (e))

(3) Unavailability of required materials when needed, resulting in the need to use other libraries, such as public, school or special libraries, e.g.:

'. . . the availability of suggested references and essential reading books is poor at the college library.'

'I borrow and use a lot of course related books from a library at a local school.'

(4) Loans policies - one student considered *'the loans system somewhat inadequate'*, with insufficient provision for differentiated loans periods (i.e. high use vs. low use items). Another lamented the difficulty in arranging interlibrary loans, saying:

'I think it is possible only for staff to order books from other libraries via our library. Students should be able to do this.'

Swinburne Institute of Technology

Despite a very positive overall evaluation of library services at Swinburne (e.g. comments like *'Swinburne's great!'*), several problem areas were identified by students:

(1) Inadequate hours of opening. This was the most frequently mentioned problem, especially amongst part timers. Some extracts of student comments:

' The hours at Swinburne greatly disadvantage part time students.'

'The opening hours of the Library are inadequate and often inappropriate to study needs (especially during holiday breaks and weekends). For these reasons, I require the facilities provided by other libraries.'

'The Library at Swinburne could be opened for a longer period of time on weekends, especially on Sundays.'

'The main drawback with my College is that the Library has limited opening hours during the weekend.'

(2) Noise and distractions in study areas. Also, smoking in non-smoking areas. Lack of shelving space. (See Section 4.43 (e)).

(3) Unavailability of materials when needed, causing students to seek out alternative sources of supply, or to spend huge sums photocopying items on closed reserve:

'Everyone needs the same books at the same time.'

'. . . students are hampered by . . . [the unavailability of] books, resulting in difficulty in obtaining required course material. Frequently . . . [books are] only available on two hour Counter Reserve, necessitating great student expense in photostat copying.'

'I would like to see us students be able to use the University libraries. At our college the books are limited, always out on loan. At the Uni., there is always a copy of the book.'

(4) Insufficient photocopiers.

(5) Unnecessary security checks - mentioned by one student, who said:

'I find the Library at Swinburne is too security conscious. This is because, after standing in a queue and registering my book for a loan, I must then often stand in another queue and show the 'date due' to the security officer. However, he is only a metre from where I registered the book.'

Footscray Institute of Technology

Comments clustered broadly around three problem areas, which are directly attributable to inadequate resourcing.

(1) Accommodation problems - crowding, the difficulty in finding a seat in the library, noise and distractions. (See Section 4.43 (e)). A related issue is lack of provision of group study rooms. One student lamented:

'In studying Recreation many of our assignments involve group participation. Thus we have to get together and talk about them. There are no places to do so as there are rarely classrooms available and we get told off doing it in the Library!'

(2) Inadequate provision of study materials. (See Section 4.43 (a)).

(3) Too few photocopiers, e.g. the following comment:

'I'm sure if the FIT Library would get more photocopiers it would be used more often.'

The only other difficulty, mentioned by one student, was the very short loans period. After highlighting the above problems, several students concluded on a positive note, e.g.:

'These are the only disadvantages. On the whole, it [the FIT Library] is good.'

'Otherwise, a good library in general, with a good span of hours at night and weekends.'

(c) Suggestions for improving services in university and college libraries

Given previous comments, many of the suggestions for improving academic library services were quite predicatble. In this section, some examples of students' suggestions are grouped under relevant headings.

(1) Purchase additional materials, especially multiple copies of high demand titles, and extend borrowing periods.

'Please supply some more text books for students and extend the borrowing time.'

'My real concerns about libraries are the lack of time given on loans . . . and the fact that so often books are not on the shelves (which I realise contradicts extended loan periods) - but perhaps more books could help.'

'Tertiary libraries could provide more copies of books used for reference for assignments although not prescribed.'

'An increase in the number of books . . . would be greatly appreciated, especially more up to date books and more simple books would be great. I say this particularly with the thought of writing medical psychology essays (and others along similar lines) in mind.'

Results

'Often I have found there is only one copy of a book available in my college library. I think for each book there should be one copy kept on the shelves which is not for loan, and at least one copy which may be borrowed. A copy which is not for loan would at least give students the opportunity to use the book, since copies which may be borrowed are rarely on the shelves.'

'Loans periods should be extended.'

'The current one week loan period is far too short. There should be some form of computer based classification system which determines how regularly each book is demanded, and a loan period of appropriate length should be allotted. What is the purpose of having a one week limit . . . on a book which is demanded on average once a year.'

(2) Improve study facilities

'Libraries should have more privacy for studying. It is difficult to study in an area with a hundred other students, even though I realise you would need a massive building in order to create more 'space' and privacy for students studying.'

(3) Extend opening hours

' Open [academic] libraries more during the weekend, especially on Sundays.'

' I would like more access to library and computing facilities at the weekend, i.e. longer opening hours and more often.'

(4) Expand user education programs

'Need more information on how to use the facilities / information provided by the libr ry.'

'We need greater education of what the entire library entails so we can get more use out of it - a broader range of materials and within different topics / subjects.'

'University libraries need written guides on how to go about finding certain material, due to their vast size and large number of books.'

'I would like the University library staff to hold brief introductory sessions on how to use the computer facilities. It would make finding references much easier. At present, I have no idea how to use these computer facilities, and I feel this is a big disadvantage.'

'I would like to see short courses offered within the libraries generally that would enable tertiary students to develop greater research skills at all levels of study, i.e. not just an introduction to the library in First Year, but an ongoing library skills course to cope with increasing demands of courses.'

(5) Other suggestions

One respondent summed up succinctly his / her idea of an effective academic library service:

'I hope this survey helps to provide library service students require in the areas of books, photocopying, SILENCE, good study areas, comfortable chairs, and smoking areas available', and added *'STUDYING REQUIRES EFFORT. LIBRARIES SHOULD COOPERATE. MORE FULLY QUALIFIED STAFF PLEASE.'*

Some suggestions were less predictable, e.g.:

'Would it be possible to purchase various items through the library, e.g. tapes as part of audio-digests the library subscribes to. At times I would have appreciated the facility to do this.'

'There should be some sort of method of using reference material outside of the library . . . [As it is] this is quite an inconvenience to study.'

'University libraries should place more importance on recreational reading matter.'

'An effective system of exchanging books between libraries would be useful.' [It is unclear whether this respondent was unaware of interlibrary loans procedures, or had used them and considered them ineffective].

Some comments were quite innovative, emphasising resource sharing, centralised computer systems and electronic publishing:

'It would be good to see the day . . . all large institutions are fixed in to a central computer system that would allow greater and quicker access to materials. . . . university libraries should allow more access by other institutions, to give "unrestricted" access to all their library records.'

'More interaction and lending between university libraries. Tertiary students should have access to all tertiary libraries.'

'I would like to have on-line access to information services via my P.C. at home.'

'The need for specialised tertiary libraries which cater specifically for tertiary students but are not aligned to any particular institution would greatly help finding sufficient references.' [Intereslingly, as noted in the literature review, this was an a suggestion made by Warren Haas[14] after his investigation into students' usage of public libraries in New York City - he recommended the establishment of several high quality, supplementary academic libraries specifically designed for students, administered by the regional reference and research library system, with collections of around 200,000 volumes, and seating for about 1,000 readers].

*'I **strongly** feel that, if this survey is going to be used as evidence for backing, say, a particular group's case for needing library finances to be directed into increased book stocks, book storage room, and study areas, then it may miss the point. I would hope that online databases, not only of journal articles, but also of whole journals / books will be available in the not too distant future, and that finances will be deployed to achieve this goal rather than, say, increased book storage space.'*

4.62 Comments on public libraries

(a) Relative roles of academic and public libraries

Approximately 120 respondents made comments concerning the relative roles of academic and public libraries.

To most of those whose fields were technical or highly specialised, the situation was quite clear cut: academic libraries catered for course needs, and public libraries for recreation and general interest materials for the whole community. They saw the issue in black and white

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14 Warren J. Haas, 'Student use of New York's libraries', *Library trends*, vol. 10, no. 4, Apr 1962, pp. 529-540.

Results

terms, neither attempting to use their academic libraries for teisure reading, nor their public libraries for course materials. Both types of library met the demands placed on them, and any attempt to compare the two was unfair or misdirected. With the great disparity in size and levels of funding between public and academic libraries, public libraries could never be expected to provide services to students at the tertiary level. Indeed, many opposed the idea of public libraries focusing on the specific needs of tertiary students. Some examples of these comments:

'It doesn't seem fair to compare the local library with the Uni. library. The Uni. library is geared almost completely toward education, texts and reference works: the local library must by its nature be generalised.'

'My expectations from my local library are quite different from my expectations from my university library or the State Library. I don't expect my public library to have resources related to my course.'

'There is little ground for comparison between the university library and the local library. I have never used the latter for study, nor have I borrowed a novel from the university.'

'The public library must fail in terms of provision for course-related and study material since many books required for uni. courses are of a specialist nature - local interest would not warrant their inclusion in the library catalogue.'

'Given the specialist areas of study with my course, I would not expect the local library to have relevant materials available for use.'

'There is no way my local library could be expected to maintain a collection of the specialised technical books and journals I require for my course.'

'I am glad of the role being played by our local libraries. It should NOT be the same role as a university library - both are needed.'

'I find that local libraries simply don't cater for my course needs at all (far too general), so I don't use them. However, I don't regard this as a criticism as their purpose is non-specialist. At present I don't read recreationally as much as I'd like, but when I start work next year I hope to, and I am more likely to use the local library for that purpose.'

'For study materials, my Institute Library is excellent. At the other extreme, the public library is superior for leisure reading. The two do not carry common material at all.'

' I use the university library and the public library for completely opposing purposes. At the university, I study - the selection of books for this purpose is superb. In contrast, the fiction selection of a public library is of far more interest to me. Their books relating to the subjects I study are too superficial to be useful. Thus I think I ignore the "light" side of the university library, and the " reference" side of the public library.'

'Local libraries don't specialise on specific subjects and topics, therefore the materials required are not often found, and also the staff don't really comprehend what you desire since the material is quite often complex Therefore . . . generally local libraries are of more use as leisure and recreational tools.'

'Local libraries do not have access to adequate funds' [to cater for the wide ranging course needs of tertiary students].

'Libraries are vital to universities, and as such are heavily funded so that they can provide the required services. Public libraries cannot direct their energies so precisely, and unfortunately they have to make a little go a long way. Spending on journals alone in most university / technical college libraries would outstrip total spending on many public libraries. The thing about local public libraries is that they are close by and provide community related details as part of their service. As a student you use your university library. As a citizen, you use your public library.'

'It is unfair to compare university and college libraries with local public libraries. They are providing services to very different populations. A faculty library can sometimes be bigger than some public libraries, and are specialist whereas a public library has to provide for its community made up of primary school kids through to the elderly, visually handicapped who need large print books. etc. University / college libraries are only intended to cater for students, lecturers, researchers and professionals in an industry who need up to date reference texts.'

'Libraries are great! I think strongly, however, that public libraries should not have to cater for the whims of an elitist minority - all of us tertiary students. They should be community based, resource oriented, homes-away-from-home. Should the needs of tertiary students and the community coincide - great; but if they don't, the community should not have to suffer a decline in resources and accessibility.'

'You are comparing two very different scale of library 'set-ups'. I would not be in favour of local public libraries trying to have available resources for the huge range of education / academic courses pursued by the residents of the area in a wide range of institutions.'

Public libraries provide a good service given their objectives, which (presumably) are to provide an accessible source of general information and basic library services to the public at large. It would be undesirable for them to compromise this objective to cater for a relatively small group of people.'

While public libraries were regarded as being of no real value for course materials where the student's field was highly specialised or technical, in some areas - e.g. literature, languages, social sciences, education, management, history, fine arts - at least at a basic level,and in the early years of tertiary courses, students did seem to use public libraries as one source of their study materials. Some comments:

'In my undergraduate degree, I used my local public library quite extensively for Fine Art books.'

*'I use **two** local libraries, one of which has a very good collection for my study purposes.'*

'If I want simple books for a school level not at the College, I try my local libraries.' [A teacher trainee].

'I have often found very useful and up to date left wing / radical resources on social sciences, which I've studied in other years, and also a good collection of feminist literature - although some librarians occasionally make negative comments when I borrow it!'

'I use the local library more for History sources and the College library for Phys. Ed. sources.'

'My home regional library is not bad considering its size - about one twentieth the size of _____ [academic] Library, and sometimes it helps me more with my studies than does the_____ [academic] Library.'

As well as the degree of specialisation and the subject field of the study area affecting respondents' perceptions of the relative roles of academic and public libraries, another strong influencing factor was the nature and resource emphasis of the particular public library the student used. In the opinion and experience of many students, the public library's provision of materials which could be used for study purposes applied only to school children, and, even then, HSC [Higher School Certificate] children were often not adequately catered for. Some relevant comments:

'The local public library has a very poor selection of more advanced . . . books, but rather has many "kiddie books". '

'My district library is very poor in comparison [with the academic library], as it caters mainly for primary school children.'

Results

'My local library is a shopping centre outlet, hyped-up, computer-touch catalogue designed to appeal to children and adolescents. Service to adults is minimal, and the computer is often "down". '

'The local library simply does not cater for the tertiary student, nor for a senior secondary school student, more for the 4 to 8 years age group.'

'I did use my local library in HSC but not since I've been at Uni.'

'I must admit I rarely use my public library for course related subjects. I was an occasional user during secondary school, but now my Institute Library suffices.'

'My local library is even short of some HSC material. As a teacher as well as a student, this is frustrating. However, I have always found the service to be helpful and courteous.'

'I use my public library almost entirely for general interest. The services are adequate for this, but the library caters mainly for secondary and primary students and for the many pensioners in the area. I prefer to use the services at the University because they are directed to the needs of the tertiary student.'

'My local public library is geared too much towards the younger members of the community. Too much time and money spent on creating an atmosphere suitable for children rather than making it a place for the entire cross section of the community.'

Most students who used their public libraries for study purposes stressed that this usage was very much of a secondary or supplementary nature, when they were unable to procure what they needed at their own academic libraries, which constituted their primary study resource. Although public libraries had a very limited supply of relevant course material, their accessibility (being close to home); longer loans periods; ease of use; helpful staff; relaxed environment; and the greater likelihood that a required item, if owned by the library, would be on the shelves; made the public library an attractive proposition. e.g.:

'My main source (i.e. the one I go to first) is the university library. I only use my local public library to find additional information for assignments, essays, etc.'

'Even though local libraries have not all the special material I need, they are good for secondary information.'

'I only go to my public library for reference books when someone has borrowed the book I need at my College Library. Instead of waiting till the book is returned, I try the local library first.'

'University and college libraries are very large and often impersonal. Some librarians are positively unhelpful, although many are happy to go out of their way to be of assistance. It seems that the [academic library] collections are not large enough to meet the demands of large numbers of students. Hence, local libraries, although not offering as good a collection, are preferable often.'

'I use my local library for the mere reason that the university library does not have enough books to cope with the demand on these books. The local library has only one or two copies, but there is little or no demand for these, and I have the assistance of the librarians to find them.'

'My main reason for utilising my local public library is to provide me with an alternative text book selection from that provided by the [college] library. In most cases, the local library text is older, but it is available. I have always found the library staff to be helpful when approached with courtesy.'

'I am more likely to find books still shelved / available at my local library than at the _____[college] Library.'

'I only use the public library if I have forgotten to get extra course related information. I go there because it takes me five minutes, whereas to go to my college library and back takes one and a half hours.'

'I have used the _____ Public Library on occasions when the College Library did not have the information I was after.'

'Although I use my Uni. library for serious studying, I still attend my local library just for "interest" and observation. If I find anything interesting, I will borrow it. If not, I may just leave as I like. I attend my local library "just in case" I might find something interesting in a less formal and less busy environment.' This respondent added a 'P.S.' which suggested an ulterior motive for the public library visit: *'I also get to meet more friendly girls in a public library.'*

'The local library has few of the [primary] resources for study that I need. I only look it up for essays where the occasional book is helpful.'

'The loan period at _____ [the academic library] is very short and if a book can be borrowed from the local library, there is a lot more time available to use it.'

'The bulk of material I use for study purposes is obtained from my college library. Most of the books I would not expect to find stocked at a general interest local library. I use the local library for additional material occasionally but more for interests not directly related to study. The longer loan period (and lower rate of fines!) is much appreciated.'

'I have had very little to do with my local library since I started my tertiary education. Although on a few occasions it has proved to be a helpful resource if I am at home and need resource material.'

'I believe that my [academic] library is more useful to me because of the depth and variety of materials related to my course which are available. However, I feel that each library supplements the other, and so I am generally satisfied with both their service and facilities.'

'. . . local libraries are more convenient since they are closer to home, but aren't as good [for course material as academic libraries].'

'I prefer to use my public library. It is much more accessible to me, and I feel much more confident there than spending countless hours in huge libraries locating materials.'

'Even though one may compare two libraries with one another, the local library can never perform the function that a university / college library can and vice versa. Nothing can surpass the atmosphere and cosiness of a local library - I belong to two!'

'Although my local public library does not have the full range of materials that I need for study, it is much more compact, simpler to use, and easier to understand the system there. Also, books referred to in lectures are not in such great demand.'

'Overall the service, courtesy and friendliness of local library staff compared to staff at my [academic] library is far better.'

Several respondents, recognising the advantages of public library usage, expressed the wish for more extensive collections related to their fields of study, e.g.:

'I would like to see an expansion in the subject matter contained in local public libraries. The loan period at these libraries, being such an improvement on University borrowing, that, if they shelved a wider range of course related materials, it would make both assignments and general study less of a headache, and ease the shortage of books at University.'

'Generally I feel more emphasis and resources need to be channelled into local library services. Those [public libraries] that I have had contact with are of little benefit - [collections] too general, facilities unavailable.'

' All my local library needs is money - for a new building, and books and materials. When I see what they have done at Brunswick and Carringbush, I wonder why our rates don't produce the same results.'

'I wish public libraries would provide more in the field of Recreation [studies].'

'I would like to see more books which present scientific topics in an advanced manner in public libraries.'

'If the local library provided material for course related study, I would use the library more often. I have been told on a few occasions by the library staff that they do not buy science and engineering materials simply because they are too expensive and become out of date quickly.'

'It is often impossible to find the necessary reference material at the college library as it seems as if it is never there. It would be ***very helpful*** *if my [public] library had more course related material.'*

(b) Difficulties encountered by students in using public libraries

Many students identified difficulties they had encountered in using public libraries. These are discussed below.

(1) Lack of relevant, up to date materials

Overwhelmingly, the major complaint was the dearth of relevant course materials. Many respondents claimed that, where present, materials tended to be either at a level which was very basic and too superficial, or out of date.

'My local public library does not have the material I need for my course.'

'The few times I have used the local library for study purposes, I have found books relating to the topic I was studying were either very basic or not present.'

'I have made several attempts to find course related material at my local library, and all have been unsuccessful.'

'I was disappointed last week with my local library because they did not have any of the text books which I needed. Their reason was because they did not see the point of buying text books when we could get them from our academic libraries. But it is very hard to get them at College when a part timer, using the Library after hours.'

'Our [public] library has lovely people, but the resources are simply not there.'

'The _____ Public Library is so shockingly understocked with anything (as the staff are well aware), I wouldn't ever waste my time looking for study related material.'

'Local public libraries are good for fiction, but usually have outdated / fragmented collections for reference, research, etc.'

'Much of the material at the local library is very old and often outdated.'

'There is a dearth of in-depth nonfiction material.'

'Course related material (for my course at least) is perhaps too much to ask of a local library, i.e. too specific to be viable. I've virtually stopped visiting the local library due to the appalling range . . . - virtually all books are dated, inaccurate or very lightweight.'

'For my hobby I like to read up on electronics books, and I have found my local library never has up to date books in this field. They're nearly all pre-silicon chip. Whereas the Uni. Library buys very high level books and books that your average person wouldn't buy. My needs sort of lie in between.'

(2) Public library staff discouraging course related library usage by tertiary students

As discussed in the next section on overall evaluation of public library services, most respondents were impressed by the heipfulness and friendliness of staff at their local public libraries. However, inevitably, there were some who had had negative experiences. Most frequently these involved public library staff actively discouraging students' library usage for course purposes. Some examples:

'When searching for reference works not available at my college library, the _____ and _____ public libraries are usually unhelpful, stating that they do not usually keep text books in their libraries, and suggesting that I try somewhere else. However, if these libraries contained adequate reference material, I would make greater use of them.'

'I tried to use my local library early in my course, and found them most unhelpful and uninterested in my requirements. I have not been back since (i.e. 4 years).'

'_____ Public Library seems to deliberately discourage tertiary study activity, and is eliminating study books from its catalogue.'

'. . . the staff at the local library are helpful but generally suggest that I use my college library instead.'

'It would be of great help if the library staff at local libraries were more friendly to the students who require their services. They "put students off" trying to get information for study purposes by being indifferent, cold, unhelpful and generally antipathetic to their needs.'

'The public library is not centred around the needs of the tertiary students, and staff do not seem to understand these needs, e.g. deadlines, photocopying.'

' Although staff are generally helpful, there has been a reverse side, a kind of tram conductor impatience and inference that I should be better able to find information myself.'

(3) Inadequate hours of opening

Several students, aware of government cutbacks in public library funding and the impact this was having on library services, complained that cuts in hours of opening were making it impossible for them to use the libraries:

'Hours of opening at the local library is currently a big issue as they are far less than what can be deemed satisfactory - it's open while I am at work !!!'

' Basically _____ Public Library hours, due to State cuts, don't operate for long enough hours during weekdays and weekends.'

'Public librarians have been extremely helpful I was impressed that I could join although not a ratepayer in the district. However, as the library is closed for so long, it is very difficult to find a suitable time to return the books I have borrowed.'

'The hours of opening of the public library are inadequate - only four and a half days per week.'

Results

'It is difficult for people living in outer suburbs and working full time to use the public library.'

A few stressed the need for increased funding for public libraries, e.g.:

'I think more money should be put into public libraries.'

'Local libraries do not have access to adequate funds.'

(4) Noise levels making study difficult

A few respondents who had tried to use public libraries to study in had found high noise levels distracting:

'Whilst public libraries I have used are much more comfortable than the Uni. Library, I find them too noisy for study.'

'My local library is usually pretty noisy, and, as such, impossible to do any serious study.'

'Sometimes there is too much noise from conversations in public libraries.'

(5) Length of time taken to obtain materials

One respondent who gave a positive overall evaluation of library services said:

'The only criticism of my public library . . . is that many of the services it offers take so long - on several occasions I have ordered new books and it has taken the library up to a year to obtain them.'

Certainly, most tertiary students are totally unaware of the length of time taken to order, catalogue and process library materials, but perhaps also many public library staff fail to appreciate the urgency of student requests for nonfiction materials. While it may not matter if a request for a novel is not filled for several months, once the 'due date' for an assignment has passed, the material is generally of no further use to the student.

Concerning interlibrary loans through public libraries, one student wrote:

'Interlibrary loans are O.K. if you have the time to chase them up. If the material is for a weekly tutorial, the time required is not sufficient.'

(6) Need for more foreign language materials

Several students lamented the poor coverage of foreign language materials at their local libraries:

'Most public libraries have very poor or non-existent collections of foreign language books.'

'Suburban libraries don't have important foreign language newspapers or reviews.'

'I have not been able to obtain 19th Century and early 20th Century foreign language journals and texts, and the libraries are not able to obtain them.'

However, the extent of provision of foreign language materials obviously varies greatly from one public library to another, as other language students commented on the usefulness of public library foreign language collections.

(7) More expensive photocopying in public libraries than in academic libraries

This was a complaint of a few respondents.

(8) Other miscellaneous problems

A few other problems were highlighted by individual students, e.g. the need for after hours return slots; toilet facilities within library buildings; and more streamlined processes to eliminate lengthy queues at the circulation desk.

(c) Overall evaluation of public library services

Evaluative comments were volunteered by respondents on their opinions of the quality of public library services.

Many comments related to the inadequacy of public library collections for study purposes. To quote one student: *'Most students would never depend upon run-of-the-mill public libraries for any course material. It is in hope that these libraries are visited.'* For further elaboration on this point, see Section 4.62 (a) on the relative roles of academic and public libraries in the student's life, and Section 4.62 (b) (1) on the lack of relevant course materials in public libraries. However, as also discussed in 4.62 (a), not all students were so negative about the value of public libraries for course needs. Some, depending on their study field, stage within a course, and on resource provision by their individual public libraries, made considerable use of their public libraries for study purposes.

Quite a number of 'other comments' related to services offered by individual public libraries. The majority of these comments were positive, e.g.:

> *'Generally the public libraries we use in the City of _____ are excellent in serving the general interests of the community by providing a wide range of books on arts and crafts, family matters, toy libraries, talking book libraries, etc. . . . '*
>
> *'My local library is _____ . It is terrific for 20th Century literature.'*
>
> *'_____ Library has a very large section on books in languages other than English, and has a good community information service.'*
>
> *'_____ Library has just recently been extended, and the quality and quantity of materials available has greatly improved.'*
>
> *'_____ Library has only recently moved into new premises. At this stage, it will take them a while to expand their range available. However, patrons are encouraged to put in requests for . . . [items] that the Library should purchase to enable them to serve the public better.'*
>
> *'Sometimes my [home regional] Library helps me more with my studies than my academic library.'*

Far fewer comments were negative, e.g.:

> *'My local library is terrible. I rarely find anything I need in the catalogue, and what is listed there is never on the shelves. They have no idea where their books are and I expect that many have been stolen. It takes them about 3 months to realise a book is overdue, so putting a book on reserve is useless. I only ever go there when I am desperate.'*
>
> *'In my experience, country libraries are uninspiring, inadequately funded, staffed, with a poor range of representative subject material. . . .'*

Many students extolled the virtues of their local public librarians - their helpfulness and friendliness, and the relaxed, comfortable atmosphere they managed to create in their libraries:

'If you add the help and service of a public library with the resources of the . . . [academic] library, you'd have it in one.'

'On occasions when books have been unavailable at my . . . [academic] library, the staff at the local public library were extremely helpful.'

'My local public library staff are very good, much more helpful than those from my . . . [academic] library.'

'I find that librarians at public libraries . . . are more helpful than the majority of librarians at the . . . [academic] library.'

' . . . in general I have found public library staff extremely helpful in both action and suggestion.'

'I have used a number of Melbourne's public libraries over the years and have always been satisfied with the service most of them provide, especially when asking for help.'

'The public library staff are very helpful, though usually there are only two of them.'

'When considering public library staff (at my particular library), my overall feeling is a positive one, i.e. the majority of employees are extremely helpful, friendly, etc. . . . On the whole, they do provide a most reputable service.'

'I don't know what I would do without the local library. They haven't got much on the shelves relevant to my course, but they obtain my requirements with maximum helpfulness and minimum fuss! It is much more convenient than going to the University.'

'It is good to get away from "forceful" study in the . . . [academic] library to my local public library.'

'I prefer to use the public library rather than the . . . [academic] library. The whole atmosphere makes me feel more comfortable and keeps me coming back. At _____ I use the library often, yet I don't feel as comfortable generally.'

(d) Suggestions for improving public library services

Respondents offered a number of suggestions for improving public library services. Most of these follow on directly from issues previously raised in Sections 4.62 (a) and (b).

(1) An increase in the range and depth of recent nonfiction materials

Predictably, the most frequent suggestion for improved services was for public libraries to:

'extend their tertiary resources';

'offer a greater range of materials that are relevant to tertiary and secondary studies, as materials provided at this time are very inadequate';

' stock more current editions'; [etc.].

(2) An extension of opening hours

After an improved range of study materials, the next most frequent suggestion was for public libraries to extend their range of opening hours, to provide greater accessibility to students, and in particular to part time students:

'The hours of opening at my local public library are very poor.'

'I would like to see the local library hours extended.'

'I think that the public library hours could be extended greatly over weekends.'

'I would like to see my local public library open seven days a week.'

'I would like to see both my university and local libraries open more hours during the weekend, especially on Sundays.'

(3) More quiet study areas

A few students emphasised the need for facilities for private study, and more effective control of noise in public libraries:

'Make the study area noise free by, if possible, having a room for discussion or conversation so as not to disturb those who are reading or studying.'

'Need a much bigger library with room for study.'

'Areas for study purposes need to be greatly extended at my public library.'

(4) A greater coordination and rationalisation of resources between libraries

Some respondents highlighted the need for improved coordination and rationalisation of resources between libraries generally, e.g. through the establishment of directories of subject strengths of different libraries, and a greater emphasis on information and referral services generally:

'Public libraries . . . should make a bigger effort to inform the public of where specialist information can be obtained, and remove the mystique from the State Library and tertiary libraries.'

'I believe there should be a much greater coordination between libraries, particularly on resources, opening hours and study facilities. This information should be available to all students as a community resource. A book could include all addresses, special collections, maps, etc. and telephone numbers. Flexibility for students is essential. This resource I believe is being underutilised.'

'Perhaps linking public and university libraries with restricted access in both directions should be considered.'

(5) More publicity on public library resources and facilities available

Some respondents were unaware of the range of resources and facilities offered by public libraries, e.g.:

'I have probably not utilised the local library as much as I could since I was unaware of some of the available facilities. It would help to be made aware of these on joining.'

(6) More user education

As well as a lack of awareness of facilities available in libraries, another reason for underutilisation of services is that library users do not know how to go about using them, and are reticent to ask for help, as evident in the following comment:

'We need more information regarding how to use the facilities / information provided by the library.'

(7) More media and equipment

One respondent suggested public libraries should '*introduce a greater range of media facilities, e.g. cameras of various types (35 mm, Super 8, 16 mm, etc.), lighting equipment, etc.*'

(8) Phone renewal of loans

Another respondent recommended the practice *'of reborrowing over the phone.'*

(9) Improved subject indexing

While some students commended public libraries on their computerised catalogues, e.g.:

> *'the use of computers to look up books is an excellent idea - very helpful if you don't know the full title or author of the book.'*

others criticised inadequate subject indexing, e.g.:

> *'The public library computer index [catalogue] is hopeless - not specific enough descriptions to find a particular topic; inadequate cross referencing for subjects, etc. - could be vastly improved.'*

4.63 Comments on other libraries

A number of respondents volunteered comments on other libraries they used, in particular the State Library of Victoria.

State Library of Victoria

Reactions to the SLV were mixed, with some very positive evaluations, but as well a few negative ones. The student's field of subject specialisation obviously affected assessment of library services, as did particular encounters with SLV staff:

> *'I think the State Library of Victoria is excellent. And their system of retrieving books and overall efficiency is good. The Library is a great place to study as well.'*

> *'I also use the State Library a lot and find it very useful - both for course related materials as well as for general interest.'*

> *'I have found the La Trobe Library and the main State Library a very good place to gather materia'. Since the books are not lent, they are usually available. They are also (usually) not scribbled on like Uni. books . . . .'*

> *'I have found the State Library staff to be particularly helpful . . . .'*

> *'The State Library is an enjoyable place to study but I find the rule about not taking in non-library books very restrictive. Often necessary books are not on the shelves, can't be found, or are several editions out of date.'*

> *'The State Library is superior to any other library for history.'*

> *'Perhaps the State Library would consider it helpful to update some of their current scientific books - many of them are unsatisfactorily out of date.'*

> *'State Library staff are distinctly unhelpful when they realise I am a university student.'*

'The Victorian State Library [is] . . . definitely . . . one of the worst I've ever used. The system is disorganised, material hard to obtain ,and some of the staff members unhelpful and snobbish.'

Other libraries

Several students highlighted the value of other libraries for their study, especially other academic libraries, e.g. Deakin University; libraries at their places of work and particular special libraries. The following comment is illustrative:

'The Conservation, Forests and Lands Library at the School of Forestry, Creswick, provides an unmatchable wealth of course related / study material, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Librarian knows the place inside out and is very helpful. The course would not be possible without access to this service / facility.'

4.64 Comments on the questionnaire

Some students made comments on the questionnaire. Most of these refered to particular questions, predominantly to Question 21, pointing out that the situation posed had never arisen (See Section 4.58 for a discussion of this issue, and for some of the comments). One student recommended: *'You should separate the journals and the newspapers. Most public libraries have a good supply of newspapers with a minimal amount of journals, while college libraries offer the opposite.'* (See Questions 9, 14, 18, 20]. Another remarked: *'I'm not sure what is the difference between general interest materials and materials for recreation and leisure.'* Most other comments related to how respondents had answered particular questions, e.g. what library was treated at the 'local public library '; or that the University Main Library and a branch library were treated collectively as 'the university / college library '.

Some apologised for late returns. Others volunteered names of other tertiary students who would like to complete the questionnaire. A couple were irritated by incorrect personal details on the envelope, e.g.: *'I suppose you are to be commended for getting my address and surname correct, but it would be even better if you had given me my correct title and initial. Better luck next time.'* While one respondent grumbled: *'This survey is too long'* , another expressed relief at its brevity: *'Thank goodness this is not one of those longwinded surveys that I am sick and tired of filling out.'*

Many respondents expressed interest in the research topic and requested copies of the findings. One said: *'I think this is a very useful survey '* and stressed the vital importance of library services to the tertiary student.

CHAPTER FIVE SUMMARY OF RESULTS

In presenting a summary results, two approaches have been used. Section 5.1 constitutes the major summary, and follows the broad sequence of the questionnaire. Section 5.2. has been included as an 'addendum', to provide a summary of the impact of certain variables - institution attended, enrolment status, type, level and year of course, age, and field of subject specialisation - on tertiary students' library usage habits.

5.1 SUMMARY OF RESULTS, FOLLOWING THE SEQUENCE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

5.11 Background to the project

In 1984, a joint meeting of the Victorian Groups of the LAA Public Libraries Section and University and College Libraries Section passed the following resolution:

> *'It was agreed that an investigation into the nature and extent of tertiary students' demands on public libraries was desirable, together with an assessment or the quality of library service given to them.'*

Each year, Fourth Year Research Methods students from RMIT Department of Information Services participate in a class research project. It was decided at the beginning of 1986 to follow up the above proposal. With the sponsorship of the Public Libraries and University and College Libraries Sections, Victorian Groups, the research problem was tackled along two fronts:

(1) Telephone interviews to a random sample of 1,080 households in Melbourne.

(2) A mail questionnaire to a random sample of students from five Melbourne tertiary institutions.

A literature search of the LISA and ERIC databases on DIALOG, and APAIS and AEI databases on AUSINET revealed virtually no comparable research since 1970. The literature that was available on student usage of public libraries focused on public library use by Open University students in Britain; various adult independent learning projects in the U.S.; case studies of the experience of particular public libraries; or general writings on the role of public libraries in the educational process.

In May, 1986, a questionnaire was mailed to a one in twenty random sample of tertiary students from five Melbourne tertiary institutions: the University of Melbourne, La Trobe University, Melbourne College of Advanced Education, Swinburne Institute of Technology, and Footscray Institute of Technology. A single follow up letter was sent to those who had not returned their questionnaires by the due date. 1,996 questionnaires were mailed; 28 were returned as undeliverable. With 1,031 usable returns, the response rate was 52.4%.

5.12 Profile of respondents

Mode of study:

71.2% were full time students; 27.7% part timers; and1.1% external students - too few external students for valid statistical analysis. It was anticipated that the random sample would yield a higher incidence of students enrolled in external mode, but it would appear that the institutions surveyed have scaled down their external studies options. Currently, a research project is being conducted at RMIT along similar lines to this study, but focusing specifically on the library usage habits of off campus students enrolled at Deakin University, Geelong. It will

be interesting to see in that study if library usage by external students differs significantly from that of students enrolled in internal mode.

Courses by level:

76.9% of respondents were enrolled in undergraduate degrees; 4.1% in undergraduate diplomas; 9.5% in postgraduate diplomas; 4.7% in masters; and 2.7% in doctoral degrees. 2.2% gave 'other' options e.g. honours degree, or second undergraduate degrees.

Courses by year:

Predictably, the majority of students were enrolled in courses of no more than three years' duration. Of the 882 students in the first three years of their courses, 42.2% were in first year; 30.4% in second year; and 27.4% in third year. Overall, 36.8% of respondents were in the first year of their courses; 26.5% in second year; 23.9% in third year; 8.9% in fourth year; 3.3% in fifth year; and 0.7% in sixth year. In courses of longer than four years' duration, part time students were considerably underrepresented.

Field of subject specialisation:

Nine broad subject fields were listed on the questionnaire. Proportionately more students from the 'softer' sciences (social sciences or humanities; and creative arts) returned questionnaires than those from the 'harder' sciences (pure or applied sciences; engineering; and computing).

Age distribution:

78.8% were under thirty years of age; 68.2% were under 25 years. Only thirteen respondents (1.1%) were fifty years of age or over. As would be expected, full time students were much younger than part timers or externals. 92.8% of full timers were under thirty, compared with 45.6% of part timers, and 36.4% of external students.

5.13 Types of libraries used, and frequency of that usage

Each student was asked to indicate whether and how often s/he used various types of libraries: his / her own university or college library; another university or college library; the State Library of Victoria; the local public library; a library at work; a library of a club, social group or church; the library of the Council of Adult Education; and any 'other' libraries.

5.131 Students' own university or college libraries

Respondents reported a high incidence of usage of their own university or college libraries. Only 2.4% claimed not to use their own academic libraries; a further 9.8% were infrequent users, using their own academic libraries only a few times a year. 87.8% claimed to use their own university or college libraries at least once or twice a month; and 72.4% at least once a week.

Full time students made much more frequent usage of their academic libraries than did part timers. 81.6% of full timers claimed to use their academic library at least once a week, compared with 52.5% of part timers, which would suggest that either part timers use libraries less than do full timers, or they prefer to use other types of library.

Undergraduate and doctoral students were much more frequent users of their own academic libraries than were postgraduate diploma or masters students. 77.7% of undergraduate students, and the same proportion of doctoral students, used their academic libraries at least weekly; compared with 45.7% of postgraduate diploma; and 45.9% of masters students.

Older students used their own academic libraries less than did younger students.

5.132 Other university or college libraries

43.7% of respondents used other university or college libraries at least once or twice a year; and 16.8% used them at least once a month. Usage patterns for full time and part time students were similar.

Postgraduates were more likely to use other academic libraries than were undergraduates: 56.6% of postgraduates used another academic library at least a couple of times a year, compared with 46.3% of undergraduates. 11.2% of postgraduates used another academic library weekly, compared with 6.1% of undergraduates.

Older students were both less likely to be frequent users of their own academic libraries, and more likely to use other academic libraries. 63.0% of those under twenty years never or rarely used another academic library; compared with 48.1% of those over twenty.

5.133 State Library of Victoria

One quarter of respondents used the State Library of Victoria, and most of these used it infrequently. 18.7% of respondents used it no more often than once in two or three months. 6.3% used it more frequently, at least once or twice a month. No significant differences were found between different categories of users for mode of study, level of course or age group. Students from Melbourne C A E , Footscray I T and the University of Melbourne were more frequent users that those from La Trobe University or Swinburne I T.

5.134 Local public library

65.7% of respondents claimed to use their local public libraries at some time; 34.3% not to use them at all. 11.3% of respondents used public libraries rarely; 32.9% used them either once or twice a year, or once in two or three months; 21.6% were frequent users - at least once or twice a month.

Virtually identical usage patterns pertained for full time and part time students. College students used public libraries more, and more frequently, than did university students. While 35.6% of college students never or rarely used their public libraries, the same was true of 45.7% of university students. 20.6% of university students used their public libraries at least once or twice a month, compared with 27.5% of college students.

'Year of course' had a strong impact on public library usage, with a marked decrease in usage of public libraries in each successive year of course. 'Never' or 'rare' users of public libraries constituted:

34.0% of cases in first year
40.0% of cases in second year
48.2% of cases in third year
65.5% of cases in fourth year
75.8% of cases in fifth year
85.7% of cases in sixth year

Those who used their public libraries at least once in two or three months constituted:

49.2% of cases in first year
41.9% of cases in second year
31.6% of cases in third year
18.5% of cases in fourth year
3.4% of cases in fifth year
0.0% of cases in sixth year

This suggests that public library collections are of considerably less value to students as their courses become more specialised and advanced; that the greatest usage of public libraries by tertiary students is for materials at a basic or elementary level.

5.135 Library at work place

For 79.0% of students, use of a library at work was not an option. But for the 21.0% who did use such a library, this usage was relatively frequent. 11.7% of respondents used such a library at least once a week; and 18.4% at least once in two or three months.

88.7% of full timers never or rarely used a library at work, compared with 45.8% of part timers. 10.3% of full timers, and 48.8% of part timers used a library at work at least once in two or three months.

Postgraduate students were much more likely to use a library at work than were undergraduates. Only 39.0% of postgraduate students did **not** use such a library, compared with 84.5% of undergraduates.

A similar pattern was evident with age group. 92.6% of those aged 15-19 years never or rarely used a library at work, compared with 85.8% of those aged 20-24 years; 53.8% aged 25-29 years; 43.4% aged 30-39 years; and 46.9% aged 40-49 years.

5.136 Library of club, church, social group, etc.

Too few cases were involved here to yield any meaningful results.

5.137 Council of Adult Education Library

As with Section 5.136, there were too few cases to derive any definite patterns in the spread of results.

5.138 Relationship between amount and frequency of library usage and courses by subject area

In crosstabulating amount and frequency of library use by broad subject area of the course, some interesting patterns emerged.

Students' own university or college libraries:

With students' own university or college libraries, the **lowest** incidence of usage was reported by management; education; computing; and medical science students. Social sciences or humanities; and creative arts ranked highly, but with little separating them from engineering; pure or applied sciences; and business, commerce, or economics. The following is the ranking of subject categories on the basis of percentages of students using their own academic libraries at least once a week:

Social sciences or humanities	81.6%
Engineering	78.1%
Creative arts	77.0%
Pure or applied sciences	73.7%
Business, commerce,economics	73.4%
Management	62.6%
Medical sciences	58.5%
Computing	55.9%
Education	55.6%

The relatively low ranking of management and education students here was quite unexpected. However, this was explained by the extent of their usage of other types of library: they were amongst the highest ranking users of most other types of library, including other academic libraries. Rankings for medical sciences and computing were low for most other types of library, excepting 'library at work place'.

Other university and college libraries:

The four highest ranking subject specialties here were management; education; social sciences or humanities; and creative arts. The lowest five were computing; engineering; medical sciences; pure or applied sciences; and business, commerce or economics. It appears that these students are much better served by their own academic libraries and have comparatively little need to look elsewhere for study materials.

State Library of Victoria:

Most usage of the State Library collections were by students specialising in:

(1) creative arts
(2) social sciences or humanities
(3) education
(4) management
(5) business, commerce, or economics

Very little usage was reported by medical sciences; pure or applied sciences; engineering; and computing students. These findings would suggest that:

(a) the State Library lacks up to date scientific and technological materials, and

(b) these students have less of a need to use collections outside their own academic libraries than do students from the 'softer sciences'.

Local public libraries:

Rankings for local public libraries were very similar to those for the State Library. Most usage was accounted for by creative arts students; followed by education; management; and social sciences or humanities students. The other five categories reported a much lower incidence of usage. It appears that tertiary students specialising in scientific and technological fields are poorly served by public libraries; that those in the 'soft' sciences are far more likely to locate relevant subject materials.

Library at work place:

Interestingly, the four lowest ranking groups for students' own academic libraries (i.e. management; education; medical sciences; and computing) were the four highest ranking groups here. No doubt, these students are more likely to be working, and to have access to specialist collections at their work place, e.g. in hospitals, schools and other educational establishments, and business or government special libraries.

5.14 Usage of university or college libraries

5.141 Reasons for using university or college libraries

Relatively few tertiary students used their academic libraries for recreational or general interest purposes (15.7%). This usage appeared to be a function of the relative amount of leisure time available, as such usage was more common amongst full timers than part timers; younger than older students; and undergraduates than postgraduates.

5.142 Resources, services and facilities used

Recorded below are percentages of students using particular resources, services and facilities in their academic libraries:

Books and other materials for loan	96.9%
Photocopiers	88.7%
Study areas	72.2%
Reference books	71.4%
Journals and newspapers	69.6%
Library staff assistance	47.4%
Audiovisual materials	31.9%
Interlibrary loans	20.4%
Computers	19.6 %
Online searches	14.0%

Predictably, loans services were used almost universally. It is interesting to note that a relatively new innovation in libraries - the photocopier - has rapidly become one of the most used library services. Increasing reliance on closed reserve collections may be one reason for this. Perhaps extensive photocopying has reduced the numbers of students using library study areas. Some concern could be expressed over the fact that less than half of respondents called on library staff assistance. Low usage of audiovisual materials; interlibrary loans; computers; and online searches is partly attributable to limited facilities in some institutions; to policy restrictions on service; or to the expense of service. Undoubtedly more user education is needed here on the nature of services offered and how to use equipment - all the more so, considering the obvious reticence of many tertiary students to approach library staff for help.

Level of course affected use of particular services. Due to policy restrictions on interlibrary loans by undergraduates at many tertiary institutions, postgraduates were by far the greatest users of these facilities (15.9% of undergraduates c.f. 39.8 % of postgraduates, and 92.6% of doctoral students). Postgraduates also had a higher incidence of usage of journals and newspapers (79.0% postgraduates c.f. 68.0% of undergraduates), and on line searches (10.8% of undergraduates; 18.1% of those studying for a postgraduate diploma; 39.1% for masters and 59.3% for a doctorate). Undergraduates utilised library study areas much more than did postgraduates (78.5% of undergraduates c.f. 42.5% of postgraduates); and also used audiovisual materials more (33.8% of undergraduates c.f.. 25.8% of postgraduates).

5.143 Degree of satisfaction with university and college library services

Students were asked to respond on a five point scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree) to six statements relating to satisfaction with library services at their university or college libraries. Two major problem areas highlighted were unavailability of materials when needed; and failure to arrange interlibrary loans. Unsuitable study areas and inadequate user instruction were problems for a minority of respondents.

'I usually obtain the materials I need from my university or college library.'

82.7% agreed they usually obtained materials they needed from their academic libraries; 7.8% disagreed; while 9.6% were undecided. One institution fared much worse than others in this respect.

'I have received adequate instruction in the use of my university or college library, its catalogues and collections.'

Two thirds of respondents considered the user instruction they were given to be adequate, while one third were either unsure or considered it inadequate. Responses varied considerably between institutions.

Summary of results

'I find library staff at my university or college library helpful and approachable.'

Generally library staff were regarded as helpful and approachable, with over three quarters of the respondents agreeing with the statement; 5.2% disagreed; and 19.0% were undecided. Again, there were noticeable variations between institutions. Part timers were more likely to view the helpfulness of library staff in a positive light than were full timers (80.6% of part timers said library staff were helpful and approachable, compared with 74.4% of full timers). Younger students were more inclined to have a negative impression of library staff than were older students: 65.0% of the 15-19 year olds; 78.9% of those 20-24; 81.0% of those 25-29; 82.4% of those in their thirties; 74.6% of those in their forties; 88.9% of those in their fifties; and 100.0% of those in their sixties, considered library staff helpful and approachable.

'I often find the materials I need, although listed in the catalogue, are unavailable.'

The perennial student problem of unavailability of library materials when needed was strongly reflected in respondents' reactions to this statement, with 56.0% claiming materials often were unavailable, and only 19.5% disagreeing. 24.4% were undecided. This is a serious cause for concern. Libraries need to give further thought to means of increasing availability of high demand items in their collections.

Masters and doctoral students were much less likely to complain of materials unavailability than were other students (29.8% of masters, and 38.5% of doctoral students; c.f. 48.6% of undergraduate diploma; 58.2% of undergraduate degree; and 59.1% of postgraduate diploma students).

With field of subject specialisation, students specialising in scientific and technological fields recorded the lowest incidence of dissatisfaction with materials unavailability - 37.2% of engineering; 42.5% of computing; 46.6% of pure and applied sciences; and 48.0% of medical science students, compared with 53.3% of management; 54.9% of education; 60.0% of creative arts; 60.1% of business, commerce, economics, and 66.6% of social sciences and humanities students. This helps explain the much higher incidence of usage of other libraries by these groups of students.

'I find my university or college library a suitable place for study.'

Six in ten respondents agreed with the statement; two in ten disagreed; and two in ten were undecided. 'Other comments' at the end of the questionnaire yielded some insights here, with many students expressing dissatisfaction with noisy, overcrowded and congested study areas; distractions when study areas were located adjacent to major traffic routes within the library; and unavailability of seats during peak periods. College libraries fared worse in these evaluations than did the university libraries. Other complaints concerned the soporific effects of stuffy, overheated study areas; and harsh lighting causing eye strain.

Full time students gave higher ratings than part timers (65.0% of full timers agreed with the statement; but only 53.9% of part timers did so).

Undergraduates were more likely to give positive ratings than were postgraduates: 65.8% c.f. 44.2% respectively. Age had an even greater impact on ratings. 78.8% of the under twenties agreed with the statement; compared with 59.0% of those 20-24 years; 57.6% of those 25-29 years; 48.5% in their thirties; 49.1% in their forties; and 22.2% in their fifties. Perhaps younger students have a greater tolerance for noise and distractions; or it may be that older students have more access to quiet study areas at home than do students in their teens.

'If my university or college library does not have the title I need, library staff obtain it for me from another library.'

Six out of ten students gave neutral responses, which suggests they were unaware of interlibrary loans services. However, with those who were familiar with the practice, there was an equal split of those who were satisfied and who were dissatisfied with existing provisions. Certainly this is a bone of contention with a significant minority of students, and an issue which

needs to be grappled with in libraries. Part time students were more likely to agree that the library arranged interlibrary loans than were full time students. With increasing level of course, ratings also increased dramatically:

13.2% of undergraduate diploma students;
14.9% of undergraduate degree students;
27.9% of postgraduate diploma students;
52.3% of masters students; and
70.4% of doctoral students.

Younger students (i.e. the under 25's) were more likely both to disagree with the statement, and to give 'undecided' responses than were older students.

5.144 Awareness and usage of reciprocal borrowing

Six out of ten respondents were aware of reciprocal borrowing provisions, and one third of these had actually used the scheme. **Awareness** of reciprocal borrowing was greatest amongst college students (c.f. university students); part timers (c.f. full timers); postgraduates (c.f. undergraduates); older students (c.f. younger students); and students in the latter years of their courses.

Usage of reciprocal borrowing was greatest amongst part timers, postgraduates and older students. There were no noticeable differences in usage of reciprocal borrowing by educational institution or by year of course.

5.15 Usage of public libraries

65.7% of respondents claimed to **use** their public libraries at least occasionally; 61.8% were actually **members** of their local public libraries - a proportion considerably higher than the State average of 43.8%. 25 respondents (2.4%) of those who said they never used their public libraries were, in fact, public library members. Conversely, some who were not registered borrowers claimed to make use of their public libraries. This supports the observation often made that public library membership is an inadequate indicator of public library usage. This was further reinforced in a comparison of crosstabulations performed on the variables of 'public library membership' and 'public library usage'. While very definite patterns emerged with regard to public library **usage**, relatively few distinct trends were observed for public library **membership**. With public library membership, only two minor differences were evident between different categories of users: the under-twenties had a slightly (4.0%) higher incidence of membership than any other age group; and the lowest incidence of public library membership was amongst engineering and computing students (note that percentages for all other subject areas were very close).

5.151 Major reasons for using public libraries

Of respondents who used public libraries, approximately six in ten used them, at least in part, for course related purposes. This would suggest that public libraries do play an important role in the lives of tertiary students. A further analysis of this study related public library usage revealed a number of definite trends. Those who were more satisfied with their own academic libraries, and particularly materials provision in those libraries, used public libraries less than those who were dissatisfied. Full time students were more likely to use public libraries for study purposes than were part timers (62.0% c.f. 53.3%), and less likely to use them purely for general interest and / or recreational purposes. Undergraduates were much more likely to use public libraries for course purposes than were postgraduates (62.2% c.f. 45.8% respectively).

With 'year of course', each subsequent year brought about a significant decrement in course / study related public library usage, and a consequent increase in usage of public libraries for general interest and / or recreational purposes. The incidence of usage of public libraries for course related purposes amongst those who used their public libraries was:

65.5% of respondents in first year;
59.7% of second years;
57.6% of third years;
40.8% of fourth years;
33.3% of fifth years; and
0.0% of sixth years.

As with year of course, increasing age was associated with a significant decrement in usage of public libraries for course related and study purposes, and an increase in usage of public libraries for general interest and / or recreational purposes. 72.6% of the under twenties who used public libraries, used them for study purposes; c.f. only 55.6% of those 20-24 years; 54.5% of those 25-29 years; 50.0% of those in their thirties; 46.3% of those in their forties; and 42.9% of those in their fifties.

With subject specialisation, there was a clear pattern of greater usage of public libraries for course related and study purposes by those in the more literature based 'softer sciences' and lesser usage by those in the 'hard sciences' and technological areas. The following list shows proportions of respondents using public libraries who claimed to use them to some extent for study purposes:

Education	72.6%
Creative arts	70.0%
Social sciences or humanities	63.1%
Business, commerce, or economics	62.1%
Management	60.0%
Pure or applied sciences	54.8%
Engineering	44.8%
Medical sciences	44.0%
Computing	38.0%

Analysing 'reasons for using public libraries' by 'frequency of public library usage' revealed that more frequent usage of

(a) one's own academic library; and / or
(b) the State Library of Victoria; and / or
(c) the local public library

was associated with a higher incidence of public library usage for course and study purposes. Conversely, less frequent usage of any of these libraries was associated with a higher incidence of public library usage for purely recreational and / or general interest purposes.

5.152 Resources, services and facilities used in public libraries

Respondents were asked to indicate which resources, services and facilities they used in public libraries, using the same list as that given for university libraries. Results demonstrated a similar overall **ranking** of most used to least used services to those for academic libraries, but the percentages differed markedly, with a significantly lower rate of usage for all services in public libraries (c.f. academic libraries), excepting loans services. In this data, the widespread public conception of public libraries as purveyors of books for loan is strongly reinforced, with almost twice as many respondents mentioning using books and other materials for loan as any other service:

	% using service in public libraries	% using service in academic libraries
Books and other materials for loan	92.7%	96.9%
Photocopiers	45.4%	88.7%
Reference books	40.0%	71.4%
Journals and newspapers	39.4%	69.6%
Library staff assistance	25.3%	47.4%
Study areas	13.8%	72.2%
Interlibrary loans	13.1%	20.4%
Audiovisual materials	11.9%	31.9%
Computers	3.7%	19.8%
Online searches	2.5%	14.0%

Use of photocopiers, reference books, journals and newspapers, and assistance from library staff are only marginally over half of the equivalent figures for academic libraries. Audiovisual materials is just over one third; while study areas, computers and online searches are each less than one fifth of the equivalent figures for university and college libraries. Many of these discrepancies can be explained in terms of the relative magnitude and resourcing of the two sets of operations. Several of the services listed are non-existent, or operating on a very limited and modest scale, in most public libraries. Photocopying facilities in public libraries are much more limited, and usually more expensive, than their university and college library equivalents. Journal, newspaper and audiovisual collections in public libraries are usually restricted in number, and more oriented toward recreation than serious study. Computer services and online searches are still the exception rather than the rule. Study areas are usually greatly restricted, and in some cases non-existent, due to severe space constraints. The very low figure for library staff assistance is disturbing. Possibly systems are easier to use, and guiding more effective, so that students have little need to ask for assistance; or perhaps severe understaffing and long queues may act as inhibiting factors.

Few clear trends emerged in crosstabulations of particular services by field of subject specialisation. Education students were more likely than others to use public library audiovisual materials and services. Computing students used computing facilities more. Computing; medical science; business,commerce or economics; and pure or applied science students were less likely than those in the 'soft sciences' to call on library staff assistance, or to use interlibrary loan services.

'Reasons for using the public library ' affected to some extent the types of public library services used. Those who used public libraries for study purposes were much more likely to use reference collections, study areas, photocopying facilities and interlibrary loans services, than did those who used public libraries purely for recreation and / or general interest.

5.153 Reasons for using public libraries for course related and study purposes

To determine why students who used public libraries for course related purposes did so, respondents were asked to tick whichever of the following options were relevant to their situations. The options have been listed according to ranking (i.e. the most to the least cited reasons for using public libraries for study purposes):

(1) The public library is more accessible, closer to home.	59.9%
(2) Material owned by the academic library is unavailable.	52.2%
(3) The loans period is too short in the academic library.	36.4%
(4) The academic library doesn't own the material needed.	22.5%
(5) The public library is easier to use than the academic library.	22.5%
(6) The public library has convenient hours of opening.	22.3%
(7) The public library has resources lacking in the academic library.	12.9%
(8) The academic library is too crowded.	12.0%
(9) The public library arranges interlibrary loans.	9.2%
[10] Other reasons.	

Summary of results

As clearly portrayed in the rankings, the major reasons for using public libraries for study purposes were - convenience and proximity of the public library; an attempt to track down specific items owned by the academic library but unavailable when needed, or suitable substitutes for recommended titles; and an attempt to procure materials on an extended loan of a few weeks rather than overnight or other short term loans.

Subsequent comments by respondents revealed they had a very clear idea of the relative roles of their academic and public libraries. They expected their academic libraries to provide their primary study materials, and realised that public libraries aiming to serve the general public lacked the resources to cater adequately for students' needs in a vast number of differing areas and at varying levels of specialisation. Respondents' use of public libraries was very much as a secondary or supplementary source. Although expectations of filling specific needs were not high, students were gratified if they were able to procure required titles or suitable substitutes and to have the convenience of longer loans periods.

Middle ranking reasons were an attempt to locate materials not listed in the academic library catalogue; and convenient opening hours (which vary considerably from one public library to another). Lesser reasons, important to a small proportion of respondents, but accounting for a minimal public library usage overall included the public library having resources lacking in the academic library (not often the case);the academic library being too crowded; and the public library arranging interlibrary loans.

Most of the 'other reasons' cited here revolved around the public library as a useful supplementary source of study materials. Some respondents commented that they had searched for relevant materials in their public libraries, but were not often successful in their search. Other comments focused on the convenience of using a library closer to home on days they were not at their university or college, especially on holidays or weekends. Some mentioned particular services or facilities offered by public libraries, e.g. journals for loan; non-English collections. Some accolades went to the friendly and approachable public library staff. Others enjoyed the change of surroundings or the cosy environment of their public libraries, e.g. *'It's good to get away from Uni.'*

'Material owned by the academic library is unavailable.'

This was a pervasive problem at all institutions. Proportionately more part timers than full timers experienced difficulties in locating materials on the shelves, which is to be expected, as part timers are often only able to access academic library collections after hours, after full time students have borrowed most of the recommended titles. Higher degree students, who are less reliant on recommended reading lists cited this as a reason for using public libraries much less frequently than did other students. This option was ticked by:

25.0% of doctoral students;
36.4% of masters students;
78.6% of postgraduate diploma students;
52.1% of undergraduate degree students; and
45.5% of undergraduate diploma students.

With subject specialisation, engineering and pure or applied science students reported the **lowest** incidence of materials unavailability, 18.5% and 33.3% respectively; followed by medical science at 45.5%; computing and creative arts at 50.0%; education at 56.4%; management at 60.0%; and social sciences or humanities at 60.9%.

'The academic library does not own the material needed.'

Predictably, given the much larger and better endowed university library collections, this was a problem experienced to a much greater extent by college students than university students. 17.3% and 15.8% of students from the two universities cited this as a reason for using public libraries; compared with 39.1%, 24.6% and 22.7% from the colleges.

'The loans period in the academic library is too short.'

Noticeable variations occurred between responses of different institutions, presumably reflecting varying loans policies (48.0%, 37.9%, 34.2%, 24.6%, 20.3%).

'The public library has resources lacking in the academic library.'

While this was one of the least mentioned reasons for using public libraries, there were marked differences between institutions, varying from a low of 7.9% to a high of 21.9%. College students cited this option more than did university students.

'The public library arranges interlibrary loans.'

The only meaningful variations amongst those who checked this option were that more older students than younger students used interlibrary loans in public libraries; and that no higher degree students gave this as a reason for using public libraries, presumably because they have all the interlibrary loans they need through their own academic libraries. It would appear that interlibrary loans are used in public libraries only when such a service is unavailable to students at their own institutions.

'The public library is easier to use than the academic library.'

Few significant variations emerged here for different categories of users. Most of the institutions were close (27.3%, 26.7%, 21.9%, 19.7%); only one had an atypically low figure: 7.8%, which may indicate more extensive user education programs or more adequate guiding facilities. Part timers were slightly more inclined than were full timers to claim that their public libraries being easy to use was a reason for using them for study purposes (27.6% c.f. 19.6%).

'The academic library is too crowded and lacks study space.'

While overall only 12.0% of respondents gave this as a reason for using public libraries, variations between institutions were significant, with one of the colleges experiencing major difficulties regarding accommodation (37.9% c.f. 10.9%, 10.5%, 5.3%, 4.0%). Full timers were slightly more inclined than part timers to cite this as a reason for using public libraries (3.6% c.f. 6.1%).

'The public library is accessible, closer to home.'

Although this was the most frequently cited reason for using public libraries for course purposes, few meaningful trends were discernible in the data. Proportionately more higher degree students gave this as a reason for using public libraries than did those at lower course levels.

'The public library has convenient hours.'

This was an important reason for using public libraries to one in four students. Naturally, this was more of an issue for part time students than full timers (32.7% c.f. 18.9%). More postgraduates than undergraduates mentioned it as a reason for using public libraries (34.0% c.f. 20.1%).

With increasing age, more respondents cited this as a reason for using public libraries. This was given by:

18.4% of those under twenty;
19.9% of those in their twenties;
29.1% of those in their thirties;
35.0% in their forties; and
100.0% in their fifties.

5.154 Proportion of library resources used for study coming from public libraries

Tertiary students were asked to estimate roughly what proportion of the library resources they used for study came from the local public library. The vast majority of the 403 students who used their public libraries for study purposes, made only very limited use of them. 86.4% of these respondents drew on their public libraries for less than a quarter of their study needs; and 61.8% estimated that less than 10% of the library resources they used for study came from the public library. A minority used public library collections more extensively - 34 respondents (8.4%) claimed they used public libraries for between a quarter and half of their study resources; 18 (4.5%) for between half and three quarters; and three (0.7%) for more than three quarters of their study resources.

Noticeable variations in the amount of resources used for study coming from the public library were evident between different educational institutions, with college students utilising public library resources more than university students; between undergraduates and postgraduates (40.6% of the undergraduates procured more than 10% of their study resources from public libraries, c.f. 23.5% of postgraduates); and between different years of course. With each additional year of course, there was a noticeable decrease in the proportions of library resources used for study coming from public libraries. Public libraries were used for more than one quarter of students' course needs by:

21.8% of first year students;
12.9% of second year students;
2.2% of third year students;
7.4% of fourth year students; and
0.0% of fifth and sixth year students.

With subject specialisation, the highest proportions of public library resources used for study came from education and management students. Those who were frequent public library users tended to procure a greater proportion of the library resources they used for study from the public library than did less frequent users.

5.155 Ratings of the quality of service provided by public libraries

When asked a general impressionistic question - to rate on a five point scale ranging from 'very good' to 'very poor' the quality of public library service **overall** , most respondents' ratings were skewed towards the positive side of the distribution. Only 11.2% rated service overall as 'poor' or 'very poor'; 37.7% said it was 'average'; and 51.2% rated it as 'good' or 'very good'.

Positive ratings were evident more amongst part timers than full timers (64.3% of part timers said public library service overall was 'good' or 'very good', compared with 46.5% of full timers); older students than younger students; and those who used public libraries for course related needs than those who used them only for recreational and / or general interest purposes (55.1% c.f. 46.1% respectively). Perhaps this is because students do not expect public libraries to provide for their study needs , so they are reasonably pleased with the type of service they do receive. With greater proportions of library resources used for study coming from public libraries, there were more positive evaluations of the quality of public library service, e.g. 81.8% of respondents who obtained more than one quarter of their study resources from the public library rated the quality of public library service as 'good' or 'very good'; 16.4% gave 'average' ratings; and only 1.8% negative ones. Also, with increasing **frequency** of public library usage, ratings improved.

Respondents were then asked to rate the quality of particular library services. Strong positive ratings were given in four service areas:

Loans services
Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study
Library staff assistance
Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes.

Moderate positive ratings were assigned to:

Interlibrary loans services
Reference collections
Journal and newspaper collections
Photocopying facilities

Strong negative ratings were given to:

Audiovisual collections
Provision of materials for course related and study purposes
Computer facilities and services.

It seems that many public libraries had no computer facilities, or very limited ones. The very low rating assigned to provision of materials for course related / study purposes may seem to conflict with the high **overall** ratings of public library service assigned by those who use public libraries for study purposes. It appears:

(a) that many students who now use public libraries only for recreational and general interest purposes have, at some stage, attempted to use them, unsuccessfully, for course needs; and

(b) that those who currently use public libraries for course needs are under no illusions over the inability of public libraries to cater adequately for their primary study needs, approaching them merely as a secondary or backup source.

As evidenced in the copious 'Other comments' given at the end of the questionnaire, respondents saw quite clearly the relative functions and roles of academic and public libraries, with academic libraries being specifically geared to course needs, and public libraries for the broad ranging needs of the general public, unable on limited resources to cover adequately the vast array of topics and levels of specialisation required by tertiary students.

However, given significant problems in the provision of academic library services, especially the unavailability of materials when needed, and inconveniently short loans periods, many students do seek out alternative sources of materials for their study needs. Public libraries constitute one important supplementary source of study materials for many students. They are libraries of second resort for course materials, and are approached as such. In this respect, expectations are low, but when public libraries do manage to 'deliver the goods', satisfaction levels rise. Hence students who do regularly procure even a small proportion for their study materials from public libraries are more likely to give more favourable ratings of this aspect of public library service than those who do not. Ratings of the quality of provision of materials for course related and study purposes in public libraries were significantly higher at lower levels of courses; in earlier years of courses; and amongst the youngest age group (15-19 year olds).

With 'Provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study ', there was a slight tendency for those who used public libraries for course needs to rate the quality of provision of materials for general interest purposes more highly than those who used public libraries solely for general interest and / or recreational purposes.

Ratings of the quality of public library reference collections did vary between institutions. More positive ratings were given by full time (c.f.part time) students; undergraduates (c.f. postgraduates); those in earlier (c.f.later) years of courses; younger (c.f. older) students; and by those who used public libraries for course related purposes (c.f. those who used them

solely for recreational and / or general interest purposes). It appears that there is some sort of 'halo effect' with those who do manage to satisfy some of their course needs at the public library: they are more inclined to rate positively most aspects of public library service than those who do not use public libraries for course needs. Similar trends to these were evident in most of the ratings for individual service areas in public libraries.

Loans services, as well as being the most used service in public libraries, were the most positively rated overall. The very limited loans periods in academic libraries was a major cause of dissatisfaction amongst respondents. The convenience of being able to borrow from public libraries for three or four weeks was greatly valued by students, especially those who managed to procure relevant study materials.

Interlibrary loans services recorded the highest incidence of 'undecided' ratings (54.1%), suggesting a majority of respondents were totally unaware of such provisions. Of those who were aware of interlibrary loans services, most ratings were positive. There were noticeable variations in ratings between institutions; between different years of courses - with the highest incidence of positive ratings in first year, and successive decrements in ratings in subsequent years; and between age groups - with more positive ratings amongst those 15-19 years of age, than any other age group.

As well as direct ratings of the quality of particular public library services, students were asked to provide comparative ratings of the quality of service in their local public libraries and their own university or college libraries. In comparison with their own tertiary libraries, highest rating services in public libraries were 'provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes'; 'loans services'; 'provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study '; 'assistance from library staff'; and 'interlibrary loans services', strongly reinforcing the view of public libraries as sources of borrowing materials, primarily books, for recreational or general interest purposes. As revealed in this survey, students do use public libraries extensively, and use them as a valuable back up resource for study materials, but definitely see their primary role along traditional lines. When compared with respondents' academic libraries, the following services ranked poorly: journal and newspaper collections; reference collections; photocopying facilities; audiovisual collections; computer facilities and services; and provision of materials for course related purposes.

The final question on the questionnaire asked if students found public library staff helpful when they realised they were students. The question was prompted by allegations of brusque treatment of students by some librarians in public libraries. With rapidly shrinking budgets and severe staffing and materials shortages, in some quarters, there has, naturally, been resentment against what are perceived as unfair and unrealistic demands of tertiary students on public libraries. The question sought to explore the extent of this problem from the tertiary student's viewpoint. Responses were overwhelmingly positive, with 87.3% of respondents giving favourable ratings of the helpfulness and approachability of public library staff, and only 12.7% complaining of poor treatment. Nevertheless, the results are no cause for complacency. The 12.7% of respondents represent 66 students who have had negative experiences in public libraries and whose perceptions of public library service have been subsequently coloured.

The most interesting of the crosstabulations performed on this variable was that by overall quality of public library services. Perceived attitudes of staff helpfulness had a strong impact on evaluation of the quality of services overall. Negative personal experiences with uncooperative staff correlated highly with 'poor' or 'very poor' ratings of service overall. Library staff need to be mindful of this in their interactions with clients. With 'very good' ratings of the overall quality of public library service, 98.6% viewed library staff as 'very helpful' or 'reasonably helpful', and only 1.4% as unhelpful. With 'good' ratings, there was a 93.4% positive and a 6.7% negative evaluation of staff attitudes. For 'average ratings, 83.5% found staff helpful and 16.5% unhelpful. Of those who regarded public library service overall as 'poor', 75.8% saw library staff as at least reasonably helpful, and 24.2% as unhelpful. With those who considered the quality of public library services overall as 'very poor', only 47.3% viewed library staff as helpful and 52.7% as unhelpful.

5.156 'Other comments'

About 400 respondents took the opportunity to give 'Other comments' at the end of the questionnaire. The comments provided an invaluable added dimension in interpreting the numeric data. Most comments clustered around services in students' own university or college libraries and public libraries. Some commented on other libraries, e.g. the State Library of Victoria; and a few on the questionnaire itself, e.g. how particular questions had been interpreted. Much institution specific data was volunteered - comments / observations on existing services, or suggestions for improvements.

University and college libraries

Analysing comments relating to university and college libraries, the following were pervasive concerns:

(1) **Ageing library collections** - the lack of up to data materials in students' own academic libraries - an issue which raises concern over the ability of some institutions to service adequately the range of courses taught in their institutions.

(2) **Unavailability of high demand titles at the times they are needed** - where titles are unavailable on the shelves when needed most. Institutions seem to be using Reserve collections more and more as the primary means of increasing materials availability, with the inevitable corollary of students being increasingly reliant on photocopying, spending a considerable sum of money in the process, and, no doubt, engaged in a widespread flouting of copyright laws. Students were quite ingenious in devising their own ways of coping with the problem of unavailability of titles:

(a) the more affluent bought their own texts;

(b) others devised a variety of cooperative arrangements, e.g.:

- cooperative purchasing arrangements;

- a liberal sharing of personal libraries;

- groups of students from different tertiary institutions who borrowed in an organised way for their friends: a system working like an unofficial reciprocal borrowing arrangement which avoids all the red tape and restrictions.

(c) usage of other libraries: other university or college libraries, public, special or school libraries.

Part time students complained more of unavailability of titles than did the full timers - as they frequently found the titles they needed 'snapped up' by full time students.

(3) **Loans policies** - Many students considered loans periods in their own university or college libraries to be too short to allow them sufficient time to finish an item. They complained of the inconvenience of Reserve collections, finding they needed to repeatedly borrow an item for use within the library before they were able to complete it, or spending vast amounts on photocopying if they were unable to work in the library for extended periods. Some resented not being permitted to use Reserve collections in other university or college libraries. Another grievance was what were perceived as discriminatory loans policies, e.g. for undergraduates, very limited loans periods, and ineligibility for interlibrary loans and / or reciprocal borrowing.

(4) **Interlibrary loans and reciprocal borrowing** There was a widespread lack of awareness of what interlibrary loans and reciprocal borrowing involved, and resentment from some that they had either not been made aware of these services, or were ineligible to use them because of their enrolment status. Others complained of the slow and

cumbersome nature of interlibrary loans, that frequently the need for the item had passed by the time it arrived; or of the restrictive conditions and red tape one needed to go through with reciprocal borrowing.

(5) **Buildings and accommodation** A significant minority of students highlighted problems with noise, distractions and overcrowding in study areas; with study carrels placed adjacent to main traffic thoroughfares to bookstacks; with stuffy, inadequately ventilated libraries and harsh lighting. One student claimed s/he could not use many libraries because of the lack of parking nearby for disabled students.

(6) **Photocopiers** Insufficient numbers of photocopiers; equipment breakdowns left unattended for long periods, placing heavy demands on the remaining machines; and the inevitable long queues were the bane of many students' lives.

(7) **Inadequate opening hours** Part timers in particular complained of inconvenient hours of opening of their own university or college libraries. Some said that Saturday mornings were unsuitable, because of other personal commitments, e.g. shopping, and that they would prefer their libraries to be open on Saturday afternoons and / or Sundays. Another cause for concern was limited opening hours during holiday periods, especially over year end, when many students were working on major projects.

(8) **Bureaucratic processes** Several respondents viewed librarians as uncooperative, locked into inflexible rules and regulations, unprepared to adapt to provide a customised service tailored to individual needs. A few recounted lengthy anecdotes to illustrate the point.

(9) **User education** Quite a number of students expressed the need for further or more appropriate user education. Particularly in university libraries, many first year students felt overwhelmed by complex systems, not knowing where to start to look for relevant materials for an assignment, and reticent to call on assistance from library staff. Some felt that, although their initial orientation tour was useful, much of what was covered was not relevant at the time, and would have been better left till when they needed the instruction, e.g.when they were tackling the first major assignment. Their comments pinpointed a strong need for ongoing user instruction.

(10) **Interaction between library staff and students** Certainly, most students found library staff pleasant and cooperative. However, some recounted anecdotes or alluded to unpleasant experiences with library staff which had had a substantial effect on their subsequent library usage. The impact of such negative personal encounters both at the personal level, and on the reputation of the library in the academic community, should not be underestimated. While some students made allowances for the occasional abrasive personality, or saw the irritability of some staff as a symptom of overwork, others were totally unaware of conditions such as the impact of savage budget cuts on staffing and services of the frayed nerves of overworked librarians. All they saw was the experience itself, and opinions they had formed seemed indelible and lasting.

Suggestions for improving services in university and college libraries:

Given previous comments, most of the suggestions for improving services in university or college libraries were predictable, e.g.:

- Purchase additional materials, especially duplicates of high demand items.
- Extend loans periods.
- Improve study facilities.
- Extend opening hours.
- Expand user education programs.

Some suggestions were quite innovative, emphasising resource sharing, centralised computer systems and electronic publishing.

Public libraries

'Other comments' on services in public libraries focused on three main areas: the relative roles of university / college and public libraries in the student's life; difficulties encountered in using public libraries; and suggestions for improving public library services.

The relative roles of university / college and public libraries were quite clear to students: university / college libraries were much better endowed, and established specifically to provide for course needs of tertiary students. Public libraries were small, poorly resourced, and given the charter of serving the interests of the whole community; they could not be expected to serve the multitude of specialised needs of tertiary students. About 120 respondents made comments of this nature. Many students had found that, because of the highly specialised nature of their studies, their public libraries had virtually nothing relevant to their course needs. Some commented that they did not expect public libraries should cater for their study needs, and even that it would be undesirable for public libraries to channel limited local resources in this direction. The individual public library or branch used obviously affected respondents evaluations of their local public library services. A few commented that their public libraries were good only for 'kiddy books', having difficulty in catering for H.S.C. students, let alone tertiary students. However, a substantial number of students commented that they did use public libraries as a valuable supplementary source of study materials, systematically browsing the shelves 'just in case' they found something useful. Other comments on public libraries emphasised the advantages of convenience; accessibility; ease of use; a friendly staff; and a cosy, welcoming atmosphere.

Difficulties encountered in using public libraries

Some of the difficulties highlighted in respondents' 'Other comments':

(1) **Lack of relevant and up to date course materials** .

(2) **Library staff discouraging use by tertiary students** , some doing so courteously, others not so politely. Some students said public library staff were happy to help, but were often unaware of the realities of student life, especially the need to meet deadlines.

(3) **The length of time taken to obtain materials** . While some public libraries actively solicit patron suggestions for purchase, it may take up to a year till the request is available for loan, an experience of a few respondents. Another problem was the long delays with reservations. Putting a reservation on a book and receiving it six months later may be acceptable with a novel for leisure reading, but not when the material is needed for a tutorial presentation in two weeks' time.

(4) **Inadequate hours of opening** . Several students commented on the inconvenience of limited opening hours brought about by budget cuts in their local libraries. One claimed it was very difficult to find time outside her work and study commitments to even return books s/he had borrowed.

(5) **Noise levels** making concentration difficult in study areas.

(6) **Photocopying** which was more expensive than in tertiary libraries.

Suggestions for improving services in public libraries:

(1) Increase the depth and range of nonfiction materials.

(2) Extend opening hours.

(3) Provide more quiet study areas.

(4) Bring about a greater coordination and rationalisation of resources between libraries.

(5) Publicise more services and facilities available.

(6) Provide more user education.

(7) Improve audiovisual collections and computer facilities.

5.2 ADDENDUM : SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT OF CERTAIN VARIABLES ON RESPONDENTS' LIBRARY USAGE HABITS

The survey was designed to determine the effects of several variables on library usage by tertiary students. Some of these findings are summarised below:

5.21 Institution attended

Amount and frequency of usage of students' own university or college libraries did not vary much between institutions. Respondents' usage patterns of other university or college libraries were similar for all institutions excepting Melbourne C A E, which had a much higher incidence of usage of other tertiary libraries than the other four institutions. Almost certainly, this was attributable to the close geographic proximity of the college to the University of Melbourne. Obviously geographic proximity also had an impact on extent of usage of the State Library of Victoria, with Melbourne C A E, Footscray I T, and the University of Melbourne recording greater and more frequent usage than La Trobe University and Swinburne I T.

Institution attended had a significant impact on tertiary students' usage of public libraries. Overall, college students were more likely than university students to be greater and more frequent users of public libraries.

Students were asked a number of questions pertaining to usage of their own university or college libraries. Rates of materials unavailability (i.e. when the material was listed in the catalogue but was unavailable when needed) did not vary much between insitutions, and posed a major problem to all. There were institution specific patterns evident with the following variables:

- level of satisfaction with provision of materials;
- ratings of adequacy of user education programs;
- helpfulness and approachability of library staff.

With some variables, there were significant differences between university and college students. More university than college students considered their tertiary libraries a suitable place for study. Awareness of reciprocal borrowing provisions amongst tertiary institutions was much higher amongst college students than university students; however actual usage of reciprocal borrowing was not so clearly differentiated.

The higher the incidence of satisfaction with services provided by their own university or college libraries, the lower the level of tertiary students' usage of public libraries for course related purposes. College students were slightly more likely than were university students to claim that materials unavailability in their own academic libraries was a reason for their using public libraries for course related purposes; and were much more likely to cite the fact that their academic library did not own the material needed as a reason for using public libraries for study needs. Other reasons listed for using public libraries for course related purposes revealed institution specific differences. 'The loans period at my university / college library is too short', yielded differences which obviously reflect the relative loans periods in each institution. No doubt reactions to the statement: 'The public library arranges interlibrary loans', also reflect institutional differences in interlibrary loans policies. While the statement: 'My university / college library is too crowded and lacks study space', did reveal strong differences between institutions, overall it was a problem cited much more by college students than by university students.

The proportion of resources used for study coming from the public library was higher overall for college students than for university students, although figures for Swinburne I T were noticeably lower than those for Melbourne C A E and Footscray I T.

College students generally gave higher ratings of the quality of services in public libraries than did university students. Significant differences were observed between the two with regard to the overall quality of public library services, and for some particular services: reference collections; interlibrary loans provisions; and loans services. While similar variations were observed in the raw data for the variable 'provision of materials for course related or study purposes', differences narrowly missed reaching the required level of statistical significance.

When students were asked to compare the overall quality of services in their public libraries with those of their university / college libraries, college students tended to give more positive ratings (i.e. 'much better than'; 'better than'; or 'at least as good') and were less likely to give inferior (i.e. 'inferior'; or 'greatly inferior') ratings than were university students. However, students from Swinburne I T were much more negative in their ratings of 'library staff assistance' and 'provision of materials for course related and study purposes' than were students from Melbourne C A E and Footscray I T. With regard to quality of 'provision of materials for general interest / information unrelated to study '; 'photocopying facilities'; 'reference collections'; 'loans services' and 'interlibrary loans services', respondents from all three colleges gave much higher ratings than those from the two universitites. College students seemed both to be more aware of interlibrary loans provisions than were university students (judging by their lower incidence of 'undecided' ratings), and to use them more. A reversal of the general pattern of more positive evaluations of college students than university students was evident with 'audiovisual collections' and 'computer services'. Here university students gave the more positive ratings, perhaps indicative of the fact that these are two areas where the college libraries may be better endowed than the universities.

5.22 Mode of study

While full time students were much more frequent users of their own university or college libraries than were part timers, there was no such trend evident with usage of other university or college libraries, the State Library of Victoria, or local public libraries. Naturally, usage of a library at work showed a strong positive correlation with part time student status.

With regard to usage of their own university or college libraries, full timers were more likely than part timers to:

- use materials for recreational purposes;
- use reference books; computers; study areas; and photocopiers;
- be satisfied with the provision of materials for study purposes;
- claim they had received adequate instruction in the use of the library, its catalogues and collections;
- consider the library a suitable place for study.

Part timers were more likely than full timers to:

- view library staff as helpful and approachable;
- procure interlibrary loans;
- be aware of, and to use, reciprocal borrowing.

Full timers were more inclined to use public libraries for course related purposes, and were less likely to use them solely for recreational or general interest purposes than were part timers. However, part timers who did use public libraries for study reasons were more inclined than full timers to claim that this usage was due to materials unavailability in their own university or college libraries; to the fact that the public library was easier to use; or to the more convenient hours of opening in the public library. Full timers were more likely to claim that they used public library study areas because their own university or college libraries were too crowded.

Part timers rated the quality of public library services overall more highly than did full timers, and also the quality of some particular services, e.g. photocopying, and library staff assistance. Full timers were slightly more inclined than part timers to rate the quality of public library reference collections as 'good' or 'very good'.

5.23 Level of course

Undergraduates and doctoral students recorded the greatest amount and frequency of usage of their own academic libraries, more than postgraduate diploma or masters students. Postgraduates were more inclined to use other academic libraries, and a 'library at work', than were undergraduates. 'Level of course' showed no significant correlation with usage of the State Library of Victoria. While the crosstabulation of amount and frequency of public library usage by level of course failed to reach the required level of statistical significance, the raw data does show a trend for undergraduates to be more frequent public library users than postgraduates.

In their usage of their own university or college libraries, postgraduates were much more inclined than were undergraduates to use journals and newspapers, online services and interlibrary loans. With online services and interlibrary loans, there was a steady increase in usage with each higher level of course. On the other hand, undergraduates used audiovisual materials, study areas, and photocopying facilities much more than did postgraduates. Also, they were more likely than postgraduates to use their own academic libraries for recreational or general interest purposes. Unavailability of library materials when needed was a much greater problem with undergraduates and postgraduate diploma students than with higher degree students. Undergraduates much more than postgraduates agreed with the statement that their own university or college library was a suitable place for study; while a much greater proportion of postgraduates than undergraduates agreed that their own university / college library arranged interlibrary loans for them. Postgraduates revealed a much higher incidence of awareness of reciprocal borrowing, and used the service far more than did undergraduates.

Although there were no statistically significant differences between different levels of course with regard to the **incidence** of public library usage, public library usage **for course related purposes** was much higher amongst undergraduates than postgraduates, with significant decrements in such usage with each higher level of course. This shows that with higher levels of course, public library usage is increasingly for purely recreational or general interest purposes. However, as reported earlier, undergraduates did tend to use public libraries slightly more **frequently** than did postgraduates. Of the relatively few postgraduates who used public libraries for study purposes, the main reasons cited were 'The public library is more accessible, closer to home'; and 'The public library has convenient hours of opening' - proportionately more postgraduates than undergraduates gave these as reasons for their study related public library usage. As resources for students studying at this level are extremely limited in most public libraries, it appears that the major reason for this usage is to save a trip to the student's own university or college library at times when information is needed urgently. Interestingly, no higher degree students mentioned 'The public library arranges interlibrary loans' as a reason for course related public library usage, while a small proportion of undergraduate and postgraduate diploma students did. It would appear that interlibrary loans are used by students in public libraries only in cases where such a service is unavailable to them at their own tertiary institutions. Materials unavailability in their own university or college libraries was the major reason given by undergraduates and postgraduate diploma students for using public libraries for course related purposes: a reason that was little cited by higher degree students. As would be expected, undergraduates had a tendency to procure greater proportions of resources they used for study from public libraries than did postgraduates; significant decrements in such usage were evident with each higher level of course. While, naturally, ratings of the quality of public libraries' provision of materials for course related and study purposes were extremely low overall, it is worth noting that ratings of those at lower course levels were more positive than those at higher levels. Undergraduates also assigned higher ratings than postgraduates to the quality of public library reference collections, journal and newspaper collections, and photocopying facilities.

5.24 Age

With increasing age, there was a definite trend for **decreasing** usage of one's own university or college library, and **increasing** usage of other university or college libraries. No significant correlation was evident between age group and usage of the State Library of Victoria, nor between age group and public library usage, suggesting that age is not an important factor in tertiary students' usage of public libraries. Since many older students are employed, it was to be expected that use of a library at work would increase with age.

Age showed a significant correlation with several aspects of usage of one's own university or college library. With increasing age, there was:

- a decreasing level of satisfaction with the provision of materials in one's own academic library;
- less usage of the university / college library for recreational or general interest purposes;
- increasingly positive ratings of the helpfulness and approachability of library staff;
- a decline in the proportions of respondents who considered their academic library a suitable place to study;
- an increase in proportions of students who claimed the academic library arranged interlibrary loans;
- an increasing awareness of, and use of, reciprocal borrowing.

Although age was not a significant factor in the **incidence** of public library usage amongst respondents, it had a significant impact on **course related** public library usage. With increasing age, there were significant decrements in course related public library usage; and a concurrent increase in usage of public libraries for purely recreational or general interest purposes. However, older students who did use their public libraries for study needs were more likely than younger students to give 'convenient hours of opening' as a major reason for this usage. The most negative ratings of the quality of public library services **overall** came from those in their twenties. Both the under twenties, and increasing proportions of those in each age group from the 'thirties' on, gave more positive ratings of the quality of public library service overall. With the quality of provision of materials for course and study purposes; and the quality of reference collections; photocopying facilities; and interlibrary loans services; the most positive ratings were given by the 'under - twenties', with a marked decline thereafter. In many of the questions involving ratings of the quality of particular service areas, there was a tendency for younger students to see things in clear 'black and white' terms, to be quite definite one way or the other; and for students as they grew older, to record a higher incidence of 'undecided' responses.

5.25 Year of course

There was a very slight increase in usage of one's own university of college library each year from first year to fourth year of a course, but with a decline in usage in fifth and sixth years. Otherwise, 'year of course' had relatively little impact on usage patterns of university or college libraries, with few statistically significant results emerging. The same applied with usage of the State Library of Victoria. With 'library at work', the only significant trend was that fifth and sixth year students used such a library much more than those in the first four years of their courses.

However, year of course did have a significant impact on public library usage overall, with a noticeable decrease in public library usage with each additional year of course. Course related public library usage also declined markedly with each additional year of course. This would suggest that public library collections are of less value to students as courses become more specialised and advanced; that they are of greatest value to tertiary students at an introductory

or elementary level. Those who used public libraries in latter years of their courses did so increasingly for purely recreational of general interest purposes. Of those in the latter years of their courses who did continue to use public libraries for study purposes, there was a marked decline in the proportion of resources respondents used for study which came from public libraries. Ratings of the quality of pubic library services in the following areas were most positive in the first year of a course, with progressive declines in positive ratings and increasingly negative ones in each additional year:

- provision of materials for course and study purposes;
- reference collections;
- journal and newspaper collections;
- photocopying facilities;
- interlibrary loans services.

5.26 Field of subject specialisation

Engineering, and pure or applied science students; along with creative arts; social sciences or humanities; and business, commerce or economics students; were the greatest and most frequent users of their own university or college libraries. The lowest incidence of usage of one's own university or college library was by students of management; education; computing; and medical sciences. There were some surprises with this ranking. It had been expected that education students would be in the 'top four' ranking groups, followed closely by management; and that engineering, and pure or applied science students would be amongst the lower usage groups. However, an explanation of this ordering emerges when rankings of subject categories for other types of library are examined.

While education and management students used their own academic libraries less, relatively speaking, than most other students, they were amongst the highest users of other types of libraries, including other university or college libraries. Students of social science or humanities, and creative arts, also were high users of most other types of libraries. Apparently, these students are more readily able to find, or have a greater need to find, acceptable substitutes in other collections than are those studying in more technical fields. It would seem that students of engineering, pure or applied sciences, and business, commerce or economics were more satisfied on the whole with their own tertiary libraries, and found less need to turn to other collections to fulfil their basic study needs. Medical science and computing students were not high users of any of the types of libraries considered. Perhaps they are more reliant on texts they purchase for their courses. However, medical science students were amongst the higher ranking users of a library at work, and, judging by some of the 'other comments' listed, of some other special libraries.

With the State Library of Victoria, the highest incidence of usage was accounted for by students of (1) creative arts; (2) social sciences or humanities; and (3) education. Undoubtedly this ranking reflects subject strengths of the library. Business, commerce and economics, and management followed, but with a much lower incidence of usage than the 'top three'. Relatively little usage was made of the State Library by students of engineering, pure or applied sciences, computing or medical sciences.

The four subject fields accounting for the highest incidence of usage of public libraries were (1) creative arts; (2) education; (3) management; and (4) social sciences or humanities. Proportionately there was a marked drop in usage after the 'top four', with a much lower incidence of public library usage by students of: (5) business, commerce or economics; (6) computing; (7) pure or applied sciences; (8) engineering; and (9) medical sciences.

Interestingly, the four lowest ranking subject categories for usage of one's own academic library were the four highest ranking categories of a 'library at work'. Management and education students were the greatest users of such libraries, followed, after a significant drop in percentage terms, by medical science and computing students. A 'library at work' was used by relatively few respondents studying in the fields of social sciences or humanities; creative arts; business, commerce or economics; pure or applied sciences; or engineering.

Greater dissatisfaction was expressed over the unavailability of materials in students' own academic libraries by those in the more literature based courses in the 'soft sciences' than by

those studying in scientific or technological areas - a fact which goes some way to explaining usage of other libraries by these groups.

Incidence of public library membership was similar for most subject fields. The only two exceptions were students of engineering and computing, who had a significantly lower rate of membership than did students of: (1) social sciences or humanities; (2) education; (3) management; (4) pure or applied sciences; (5) creative arts; (6) medical sciences; and (7) business, commerce or economics - for whom figures were close.

However, public library membership was found to be an inadequate indicator of public library usage. A clear pattern emerged of greater and more frequent usage of public libraries by those in the 'soft sciences'. The highest users were students of (1) education; (2) creative arts; (3) social sciences or humanities; (4) business, commerce or economics; and (5) management. The lowest ranking user groups were: (6) pure and applied sciences; (7) engineering; (8) medical sciences; and (9) computing.

Proportionately more education students than other students used audiovisual collections in public libraries; and computing students, computing facilities in public libraries. Students studying in the 'soft sciences', were much more likely to call on library staff assistance and to use interlibrary loans in public libraries than were students of the 'hard sciences'.

Education and social sciences or humanities respondents reported the highest proportions of public library usage for course related purposes. Materials unavailability in students' own academic libraries, the primary reason for using public libraries for study purposes, was cited most by students of (1) business, commerce or economics; (2) social sciences or humanities; (3) management; and (4) education. Education and management students gave the most positive ratings of the quality of public library services in a number of areas.

Implications of some of these findings for the provision of library services for tertiary students in Victoria are addressed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Note: Page references given throughout this chapter are to page numbers in this report.

6.1 TERTIARY STUDENTS AND LIBRARY USAGE

The current research has achieved its goal of identifying broad trends in library usage amongst Melbourne tertiary students. What has emerged is a complex mosaic, but one which is characterised by definite, recognisable patterns. Factors such as institution attended; mode of study; level, and year of course; field of subject specialisation; and age; have been shown to impact strongly on tertiary students' library usage habits. However, before examining the effects of individual variables, some general observations should be made.

As a group, the tertiary students surveyed appeared intelligent, highly resourceful, self-directed and purposive in their information seeking behaviour. This accords with Haas's observation of his New York sample - that college students were above all else 'supremely practical' in their selection of information sources (see p. 8).

One of the focus questions under investigation in the current research was whether or not students were making unrealistic demands on their public libraries. From time to time AACOBS and other library related bodies have suggested distributing to tertiary students an information booklet outlining the relative roles of different types of libraries within the community, in an attempt to alleviate the 'problem' of unreasonable demands being made on libraries not set up to cater for their needs. While such a venture may be of some value, the author seriously doubts its efficacy in addressing this 'problem'. An analysis of the results of the survey, and in particular some of the 'other comments', leaves the strong impression that most tertiary students have a very clear idea of the relative roles of different types of libraries and other information sources, and that this knowledge has been gained experientially. Respondents appeared to be highly versatile in their information seeking behaviour, trying first an obvious source of supply such as their own university or college libraries, but when unsuccessful systematically searching out a range of alternative sources available to them, i.e. they manifested an ability to quickly analyse strengths and weaknesses of the primary library and to adapt their behaviour accordingly. For instance, if a prescribed text were not available from the open shelves in an academic library, the student may:

- try the Closed Reserve collection, and read the item in the Library, or photocopy relevant sections;
- buy the item individually, or on behalf of a group of students studying the subject;
- borrow the item from a friend;
- ask a friend studying at another institution to borrow the item from that institution's library on his / her behalf;
- try other libraries (academic, special, public or school libraries, or the State Library) - which may involve using the item inhouse, borrowing it through normal channels, as a reciprocal borrower, or on interlibrary loan.

Certainly, from a public librarian's viewpoint, requests made by some tertiary students may appear unreasonable. However, a testing of alternative information sources seems to be an integral part of the learning process, and one which tertiary students, by and large seem to master fairly quickly. Such learning seems more enduring than a single reading of a brochure on the roles of different types of libraries. Any such publication, too, could present only general information on broad functions, but never accurately reflect the diversity of individual libraries within the one sector (e.g. the headquarters of a large suburban regional public library system with an extensive reference collection c.f. a small branch public library or bookmobile which caters for little else than popular recreational reading), nor the wide variety of backgrounds from which tertiary students come.

Embedded in the librarian's professional consciousness is a desire to render order out of chaos, to devise carefully planned information networks, and to prescribe the functions of component parts. Unfortunately, human information seeking behaviour is not so easily regulated. One outcome of the current research is that **tertiary students do experiment with a range of information sources, and settle with those which best meet their informational needs, or those which are most accessible.**

Public libraries have long acknowledged an educational role. However, this role is often interpreted in terms of general enlightenment, but excluding any specific course related materials for students enrolled in formal courses. This survey has shown that students do not make such distinctions. Pragmatic and realistic, they will try the public library as an information source, and, if it meets their needs, they will utilise its resources for study; if not, they will try somewhere else. As has been demonstrated, **public libraries are much more likely to meet the study needs of some students than they are of others**, the extent of usage varying according to factors such as study field; stage within a course; level of the course; and the resource provision of both the home institution library and the individual public library.

Most public library user surveys have shown that at least one third of all usage is from students enrolled in formal courses. In the current study, public library membership rates amongst Melbourne tertiary students were shown to be much higher than the State average (61.8% c.f. 43.8%). 65.7% of respondents claimed to use public libraries at some time - approximately a third of these were frequent users - at least once or twice a month. A **substantial proportion of student usage of public libraries was for purposes which were directly course related.** Amongst undergraduates who used public libraries, 62.2% used them at least in part for course purposes, as did 45.6% of postgraduates.

While the overall picture to emerge from this survey is of a complex network of information sources used by students in fulfilling their study needs, **there is no doubt that the student's own academic library constitutes the primary information source.** Almost 90% of respondents were frequent users of their own academic libraries, and over four fifths agreed that they 'usually' obtained the materials they needed from their own academic libraries. **Other sources played an important, but supplementary / secondary role, and were utilised mainly when the primary source failed.** For instance, 86.4% of those who used public libraries for course purposes derived less than one quarter of their study materials from them; and 61.8% less than one tenth (which appears to be consistent with Wainwright and Dean's finding that c. 10% - 25% of library materials tertiary students use for study emanate from outside the home institution library - see pp. 9 - 10). The major problem encouraging utilisation of public libraries was the unavailability of materials owned by the student's own academic library at the time needed. The convenience / proximity of the public library as an information source was another important factor. When students were able to locate relevant course materials in their public libraries, the longer loan period available (usually 3 - 4 weeks compared with one week or less in their academic libraries) was an attractive feature of public library usage.

Most respondents were under no illusions over the inability of public libraries to cater adequately for their study needs. They saw quite clearly the relative roles and functions of academic and public libraries - academic libraries existing for the express purpose of serving the course related and research needs of students and staff within their institutions, and public libraries, the wide ranging interests of the general public - and appreciated the significant differential in resourcing levels of the two sets of operations. Hence they **approached public libraries very much as libraries of second resort , and not as primary sources of study materials.** Their expectations of public libraries were low, but when they managed to 'deliver the goods', satisfaction levels rose. When asked to rate the quality of various public library services, those who procured even a small proportion of their study materials from public libraries gave higher ratings than did those who used public libraries solely for recreational purposes.

6.2 RECIPROCAL BORROWING AND INTERLIBRARY LOANS

Reciprocal borrowing and interlibrary loans constitute two means of improving access to library resources .

6.21 Reciprocal borrowing

Reciprocal borrowing is one way of providing materials for tertiary students when their own library has failed them. The survey revealed a reasonably high incidence of **awareness** of reciprocal borrowing amongst tertiary students - approximately 60% overall, with a much greater awareness amongst college students than university students; part timers than full timers; postgraduates than undergraduates; and older than younger students. About a third of those who were aware of reciprocal borrowing had actually used it. **Usage** was greatest amongst part timers (c.f. full timers); postgraduates (c.f. undergraduates); and older (c.f. younger) students. No significant differences in **usage** patterns were revealed between college and university students.

In the 'other comments', a number of students expressed reservations about using the scheme as it currently operates, due to the extent of red tape / bureaucratic restrictions involved. Perhaps some attention could be devoted to simplifying procedures. **Potentially, reciprocal borrowing provisions could be extended to include libraries from other sectors.**

6.22 Interlibrary loans

In comparison with reciprocal borrowing, there was an very low awareness of interlibrary loans provisions amongst tertiary students surveyed. Over 60% of respondents said they were 'neutral / undecided' when asked about provision for interlibrary loans in their academic libraries. 'Other comments' (see pp. 205 - 206) indicated that many students were totally unaware of what an interlibrary loan was, and that they were somewhat resentful that they had not been told of these provisions. Of those who were aware of interlibrary loans, equal numbers agreed and disagreed that they had access to interlibrary loans through their academic libraries. Many more postgraduates than undergraduates; part timers than full timers; and older than younger students agreed with the statement that their academic libraries arranged interlibrary loans. Amongst undergraduates who were denied access to interlibrary loans due to policy restrictions imposed by academic libraries, there was a strong feeling that they were being discriminated against. **If an equitable charge were levied on users for each interlibrary loan made, there would appear to be no valid reason why academic libraries should continue to discriminate between users on the basis of their borrower status.**

Although availability of interlibrary loans was not a primary reason for students using public libraries for course related purposes, it was a service utilised by a minority of students. 13.1% of students using public libraries claimed to use their interlibrary loan facilities. It is worth stressing that interlibrary loans were used also by only a small proportion of students in their own academic libraries (20.4%). **As no higher degree students used interlibrary loans in public libraries, one could assume that many of the students utilising this facility are those denied such access in their own academic libraries.**

Certainly, there are problems for students with the interlibrary loans system as it currently operates in Australia - its slow and cumbersome nature renders it useless to many students, whose information needs are more urgent (again as evidenced in students' 'other comments'). **The profession needs to give serious thought to possible means of speeding up the interlibrary loans process, and reducing record keeping requirements.** Electronic mail, VIATEL, etc., may help in this regard. If tertiary students, as other library clients, are now expected to pay for interlibrary loans made on their behalf, they are likely to impose pressure on libraries for service improvements and faster delivery times.

6.3 FACTORS IMPACTING ON TERTIARY STUDENTS' LIBRARY USAGE HABITS

A number of factors have been identifed by the current research and previous studies as affecting the nature and extent of library usage by students. Several of these are addressed below:

(1) **Teaching methods.** Other studies have established a strong link between teaching methods / lecturers' expectations of library usage by their students, and students' subsequent library usage habits (See works by Wainwright and Dean; Mays; Wilson and Gains; and others cited in the 'Review of the literature'). Although this factor was not specifically addressed in the current research, the different library usage patterns identified amongst various categories of students would tend to support this observation. Further research is needed into the impact of this variable on students' library usage habits.

(2) **Collection characteristics** Many surveys have identified a strong connexion between library usage and the nature of the library collection; the recency of its materials; and its coverage of one's subject field. e.g. Stayner's 1981 study established a close association between recorded level of usage of certain Victorian public libraries and level of resources in those libraries. He claimed that excess demand for public library services exists, and that if additional resources are made available, they would be converted into use (see p. 35). Haas found that New York students used several public libraries, migrating from one to another according to their collection strengths (see p. 8). **The current research has provided clear evidence that the relative level of resourcing of the academic library influences the student's usage of alternative information sources.** College students were more likely than university students to use public libraries; to derive greater proportions of course related materials from public libraries; to claim that usage of public libraries for course related purposes was attributable to the academic library not owning the material, or to materials unavailability in their academic libraries; and to rate positively most public library services.

(3) **Course characteristics** Definite variations in library usage patterns for students from different courses have been observed by other researchers. Students enrolled in more literature based courses tend to manifest higher proportions of library usage generally than do those studying in less literature based fields, and also a greater usage of a variety of information sources. Those studying in highly specialised, technical fields, seem to find fewer suitable alternative sources outside their own academic libraries. For instance, Haas found a slightly lower incidence of usage of public libraries from students from specialist colleges (medical, scientific, music or theological), and higher usage rates from those studying in the areas of liberal arts and education (see p. 8). Wainwright and Dean found that physiotherapy students from Lincoln Institute used few libraries other than their own Institute Library (see p. 9). In summarising the literature, they concluded that courses with higher contact hours, and especially those with a large practical / laboratory component, tended to yield lower rates of library usage in comparison with other courses (see p. 11). Another course related characteristic of library usage identified by the same authors was an increasing incidence of library usage amongst students of higher levels (see p. 11). Mays found minimal library usage amongst first year, internally enrolled undergraduates at Deakin University (see p. 13). Gains, Wilson and Masterton's surveys highlighted a relatively low incidence of public library usage by Open University students in the first two years of their courses, but higher rates in later years, when their courses required more individualised work (see p. 14).

The three course characteristics investigated by the current research were level of course; year of course; and field of subject specialisation. **Level of course** showed a stronger correlation with types of libraries used than with frequency of library usage, undoubtedly a reflection of the collection strengths of different libraries. Postgraduate diploma and masters students actually used their own libraries **less** frequently than did undergraduates or doctoral students. However, postgraduates were much higher users of other academic libraries and special libraries (including 'library at work') than were undergraduates. Undergraduates used public libraries more for course related purposes than did postgraduates, deriving greater proportions of the resources they used for study from them. Usage of particular resources,

services and facilities also showed considerable variation by level of course. In their own academic libraries, postgraduates were greater users of journal and newspaper collections, online services and interlibrary loans, while undergraduates used audiovisual materials, study areas and photocopying facilities more. Undergraduates were more likely to use their own academic libraries for recreational and general interest purposes than postgraduates, and to experience greater problems with materials unavailability. In public libraries, undergraduates used interlibrary loans more than postgraduates, and assigned more positive ratings to public library reference, journal and newspaper collections, and photocopying facilities.

Year of course had only a minimal impact on usage of students' own academic libraries, but had a greater influence on their usage of other libraries. Students in fifth and sixth years of their courses tended to use their own libraries less than those in the first four years of their courses, and other specialist libraries more. Public library usage overall, and in particular course related usage of public libraries, was highest in first year of a tertiary course, and declined significantly with each additional year, suggesting that **public library collections are limited value once subjects become more specialised and advanced.**

Some of the most interesting findings of the current research involve analysis of library usage by **field of subject specialisation** . Medical science and computing students manifested relatively low usage rates of all types of libraries, excepting some special libraries. However, engineering and pure or applied science students, perhaps contrary to expectations, revealed a similar amount and frequency of usage of their own academic libraries to social sciences or humanities, creative arts, and business, commerce or economics students. These students were also less inclined to complain of materials unavailability in their tertiary libraries than were students from the more literature based disciplines. Management and education students, some of the lowest users of their own academic libraries, were amongst the highest users of most other types of libraries, including other university and college libraries, the State Library of Victoria, public libraries, and a 'library at work'. It seemed that students in some of the more technical fields, especially engineering, pure and applied sciences, and business, commerce or economics were more satisfied with their own university or college libraries, with less need to supplement these collections with materials from other sources. Also, collection strengths of other libraries obviously affected students' library usage - the State Library of Victoria and public libraries, for instance, have greater subject strengths in the 'softer sciences' than in more technical fields. In summary, **field of subject specialisation was shown to have a substantial impact on the types of libraries and the variety of information sources students used, but less of an effect on the frequency of usage of their own academic libraries.**

(4) **Accessibility.** Accessibility factors such as distance from the library and hours of opening have been shown in many user surveys to have an impact on library usage habits - as described by Wainwright and Dean, Haas, and others (see pp. 8 - 9). The current research supports such findings. Especially with regard to course related public library usage, accessibility factors were important determinants of usage. The proximity and convenience of the public library was the most often cited reason for utilising public libraries for study purposes; convenient hours of opening was another important reason. Students' 'other comments' provided further insights here. e.g. Many students explained that they used public libraries at weekends, or over holidays, when they were away from university / college. Others complained about restricted access due to limited library opening hours at their own tertiary institutions, and / or at their public libraries, requesting that library hours be extended. This was particularly the case amongst part time students who worked full time. One disabled student raised the issue of restricted access to libraries due to lack of parking facilities for disabled students.

(5) **Student characteristics**

Age was the only demographic characteristic under investigation in this study. In previous user studies, findings on the impact of age on library usage habits have been contradictory and inconclusive. Hence, for the current research, it was postulated that age would not have a significant impact on tertiary students' library usage habits. Although age had no significant impact on overall public library usage, nor usage of the State Library of Victoria, it was found to have a considerable effect on some other aspects of library usage. With increasing age, there was a definite trend of decreasing usage of respondents' own academic libraries, and increasing usage of other academic and special libraries; a progressive decline in course

related public library usage; an increase in the use of interlibrary loans from the academic library, and in reciprocal borrowing; and a decrease in the use of study facilities in the academic library. The under-twenties tended to give more positive ratings of library services in a number of areas than did older students, except ratings of the helpfulness and approachability of library staff, which increased with age. Younger students tended to see things in much more 'black and white' terms - a definite 'Yes' or 'No' answer, whereas 'undecided / no opinion answers increased significantly with age.

Mode of study Wainwright and Dean observed in their literature review that most previous studies had shown part timers to have a much lower incidence of usage of their own academic libraries than full time students. They attributed this largely to inadequate opening hours of tertiary institution libraries, and to the fact that part timers are more likely than full timers to have access to alternative sources of study materials (see p. 11). The current study also found full time students were much greater and more frequent users of their own university and college libraries than were part timers. However, there were no noticeable differences between full timers and part timers over extent of usage of other academic libraries, the State Library of Victoria, or public libraries. Of course, part timers had a high incidence of usage of a library at their places of employment. Full timers were more inclined than part timers to rate more highly most resources and services in their academic libraries. However, part timers were more likely to procure interlibrary loans through their academic libraries; to view library staff as helpful and approachable; and to use reciprocal borrowing. Although part timers used public libraries less for course related purposes than did full timers, those part timers who used public libraries for their study needs were more inclined to claim this was due to materials unavailability in their academic libraries, and to the public library's more convenient hours of opening. This was strongly reinforced in part time respondents' 'other comments' - many claimed that recommended texts had disappeared from the shelves, taken by full time students, before they got to the library; and that hours of opening, both of academic libraries, and many public libraries, seriously disadvantaged them.

Psychological characteristics Kosa, Hatchard and Toy, and others have researched the phenomenon of the psychological barrier between students and librarians, a factor which can discourage student library usage (see pp. 11 - 13). Kosa found 49% of undergraduates hesitated in asking reference librarians for help, compared with c. 32% of postgraduates, suggesting that, with maturation, students become more self-confident and less reticent to seek help. These findings are strongly reinforced in the current study, with only 47.4% of respondents claiming to call on library staff assistance in their own academic libraries, and 25.3% in public libraries. Nevertheless, when asked if they considered staff at their university or college libraries helpful and approachable, approximately three quarters of respondents agreed they were - apparently, one quarter of respondents answered this question from a theoretical stance rather than from personal experience! Ratings of staff helpfulness were higher amongst part timers than full timers, and amongst older than younger students, hinting that library staff may interact more positively with mature and experienced students. 'Other comments' pertaining to interactions of students with library staff add further support to Kosa's, and Hatchard and Toy's findings (see p. 207 - 208). **The significance of amicable relationships between library staff and students is reinforced by the halo effect evident in ratings of all library services.** As seen in Section 4.58, respondents who regarded public library staff as helpful were much more inclined to rate all aspects of library service as 'good' c. 'very good' than were those who had negative encounters with library staff and perceived them as unhelpful.

Another psychological factor revealed in respondents 'other comments' was a sense of being overwhelmed by the sheer size and complexity of the academic library (particularly in the universities) - a problem more prevalent amongst first year undergraduates, but also experienced to some extent by older students, e.g. a woman in her forties who felt intimidated not only by the unfamiliar library systems, but also by the apparent proficiency of the younger students using these systems.

As Kosa, and Hatchard and Toy have recommended, a **more concerted effort in the area of user education is needed** to overcome these problems; and more attention devoted to factors such as the approachability of staff at the reference desk, and the physical set up of the reference area (which can act as a deterrent to students needing help).

6.4 SOME IMPLICATIONS OF RESULTS FOR PLANNING LIBRARY SERVICES FOR TERTIARY STUDENTS IN VICTORIA

Library user surveys investigating patterns of usage of individual libraries or library systems abound in the professional literature. However, fewer researchers have attempted a wider analysis of library usage habits. A strength of the current research is that it goes some way to filling in the broader picture of patterns of library usage amongst tertiary students, of showing some of the interrelationships between usage of a variety of libraries and other information sources. It has provided insights not possible when considering one library or type of library in isolation. This analysis has highlighted the integrated nature of tertiary students' library usage habits, their utilisation of a complex network of information sources.

At the time of writing, a large scale review and evaluation of library services in Victoria is underway, an aftermath of the Geddes and other reports commissioned by the State Government. Originally focusing on public libraries, the scope of the review seems to have broadened somewhat to encompass all publicly funded library services within the State. Geddes' Second Report addressed the issue of possible means of improving the cost effectiveness of library services generally within Victoria through greater coordination and integration of services.

Such moves are a direct reaction to the severe economic crisis confronting all libraries. With dwindling Government resources at all levels, a massive injection of funds is not an option. 'Do more with less' is the message governments are relaying to all publicly funded institutions. It is naive to assume libraries are exempt from government austerity measuers and calls for productivity gains. The answer to the apparently insurmountable financial difficulties each library sector is facing is elusive, but there are recurrent themes - the need to be accountable for the ways public monies are spent; to demonstrate cost effectiveness in service delivery; to lessen total reliance on government funding by broadening the funding base - and by becoming more 'entrepreneurial'; and to increase inter-sector and cross-sector cooperation.

As indicated on pp. 41 - 42, CTEC (Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission) in its 1988 - 1990 triennial report foreshadowed a breaking down of the rigid barriers separating major library sectors, as a possible means of curtailing rapidly escalating cost increases. A rationalisation of collections and cooperation in service delivery between university, college, public and other libraries within a region, utilising relevant information technologies is envisaged. Such a policy is consistent with both the Federal and State Governments' emphasis on decentralisation, the 'devolution' of decision making powers to the regional / local level. However, whether such moves would bring about substantial savings to governments in funding library services remains to be seen.

The findings of the current study support the need for a more cohesive, better integrated library network, with easy access through any of the nodes. A regionally based system involving close inter-sector and cross-sector cooperation, and also firmly established links outside the region, potentially could provide enhanced services to tertiary students, speedier access, improved document delivery, and reduce unnecessary duplication of effort. One option which could be considered is the establishment of regional reference / research libraries along the lines of the British public library system, or as suggested by Haas (see p. 9). Another is a revitalisation of the now virtually defunct Melbourne Subject Specialisation Scheme, but extending its coverage to other library sectors.

The results of this research have called into question many of the profession's assumptions of the distinctive roles and functions of each library sector. The approach adopted here has been that **students' information seeking habits are best explained in behavioural terms.** Tertiary students seem readily to evaluate the adequacy of their own academic libraries in fulfilling their course needs, and, if necessary, seek out and test suitable alternative sources. Most course needs are met by students' own academic libraries, but a significant minority are derived from secondary sources, such as public libraries. In providing some preliminary indications of the extent of tertiary students' usage of public libraries for

course related purposes, this study does raise a number of issues which must be grappled with by the profession and funding authorities. For example, to take up a suggestion of Haratsis's, if a public library can demonstrate a significant educational function, and a high incidence of student usage, should it not be supported in part by State and Federal Education budgets?

Any moves for a radical restructuring of library roles and responsibilities as currently perceived will inevitably encounter vigorous opposition from within the profession, as individual libraries and library sectors strive to preserve their own identities and empires. Yet it may be possible to enhance the current system to some extent by developing links between sectors, and to diversify the existing resource base to reflect more the functions different sectors are currently performing. In the prevailing economic climate, it is imperative that library and information service professionals are alert to political and social developments, able to read the signs accurately; to grasp opportunities; to rise to new challenges; to experiment with innovative and creative solutions - in a word, to be proactive rather than passive and reactive.

6.5 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has provided a broad map of library usage habits amongst a representative sample of Melbourne tertiary students, highlighting general trends and issues. To test the validity of the findings, more focused research at the individual library level is desirable. Also, similar research in other locations is needed to determine if patterns of usage identified in the Melbourne study are more widely generalisable. In any such research, a more specific emphasis should be placed on students' usage of special libraries.

A number of more specific suggestions for further research have been made throughout the report, including the following:

- similar research into the library usage habits of externally enrolled students;
- a study of the impact of teaching methods and lecturers' expectations of student resource usage on subsequent library usage by students;
- a study which relates a personal evaluation of the academic library's collection adequacy in the student's field of study to usage of other libraries;

As suggested on p. 47, there could also be some experimentation with how different cover letters impact on the response rate of a questionnaire.

Following on from comments made in the previous section, perhaps the greatest challenge is for some 'action research' into suitable models of an integrated, cooperative regionally based library network. This would involve a trek into the unknown, 'treading untrod ground', and researchers and practitioners working closely together. If the profession does not take the initiative in this area, there is a very real danger of having unsuitable models developed by the public service and imposed from above.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A Questionnaire and cover letter

RMIT

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

GPO Box 2476V
Melbourne Vic 3001
Telephone ~~3452822~~ 6602900
Telegraphic Address
Meltech Melbourne
Telex AA36406

Department of Information Services

5 May 1986

Dear Colleague

TERTIARY STUDENTS' USAGE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES SURVEY, MELBOURNE, 1986

The Library Association of Australia University and College Libraries Section and Public Libraries Section are sponsoring an RMIT Dept. of Information Services survey on tertiary students' usage of public libraries. The Library Association is seeking feedback on the nature and extent of tertiary students' use of public libraries, together with an assessment of the quality of library service provided.

Your participation in the Survey would be much appreciated. This will help libraries to improve services to students in a number of different ways.

Please complete the Questionnaire and return it to RMIT in prepaid envelope provided. It should take you no more than ten minutes to fill in. If you could do so now and return it promptly, would help us greatly. The questionnaire is required no later than Friday, June 6.

If you have any queries, please contact me on 6602900 ext 48.

Thanking you in anticipation of your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Kerry Grosser

KERRY GROSSER
Lecturer

Encl.

TERTIARY STUDENTS' USAGE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES SURVEY, MELBOURNE, 1986

QUESTIONNAIRE

CASE NUMBER

For each of the following questions, please tick the relevant box, or follow other instructions given for the question.

Section A should be completed by all respondents. Section B should be completed if you use your university or college library, and Section C if you use your local public library, ie if you use both your university/college library and your local public library you should complete all three sections.

SECTION A

1. Which tertiary institution do you attend?

---

2. Are you studying

(1) full-time? ☐
(2) part-time? ☐
(3) as an external student? ☐

3. Is the Course you are currently enrolled in

(1) an undergraduate degree? ☐
(2) an undergraduate diploma? ☐
(3) a postgraduate diploma? ☐
(4) a Masters degree? ☐
(5) a doctoral degree? ☐
(6) Other (Please specify) ☐

---

4. (a) In which Course are you currently enrolled?

[Please write course title in the space below]

(b) In which year of your Course? (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.)

[If part-time, please indicate the equivalent full-time year]

---

5. Which of the following broad subject areas best describes your field of study?

(1) Pure/applied science
(2) Medical sciences (incl. Vet. science and paramedical areas, e.g. Physiotherapy, Nursing)
(3) Engineering
(4) Computing
(5) Social science/ Humanities
(6) Creative arts (e.g. art, fine art, music, dance)
(7) Education
(8) Business/Commerce/ Economics
(9) Management
(10) Other (Please specify) _____

6. To which age group do you belong?

(1) 15-19
(2) 20-24
(3) 25-29
(4) 30-39
(5) 40-49
(6) 50-59
(7) 60-69
(8) 70 and over

7. What types of library do you use, and how often? Please tick the relevant column for frequency of use, for each type of library. If you do not use a particular type of library, tick in the (1) column.

TYPE OF LIBRARY	FREQUENCY OF USE						
	(1) I never use	(2) I rarely use it (less often than once a yr)	(3) I use it once or twice a year	(4) I use it every two or three months	(5) I use it once or twice a month	(6) I use it about once a week	(7) I use it more than once a week
A. Your own university or college library							
B. Another university or college library							
C. State Library of Victoria							
D. Local public library							
E Library at work place							
F. Library at club, church, social group, etc.							
G. Council of Adult Education Library							
H. Other (Please specify) _____ _____							

SECTION B

USAGE OF UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY

COMPLETE THIS SECTION IF YOU USE YOUR UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE LIBRARY

8. For what purposes do you use your university or college library?
(You may tick more than one)

(1) Course-related/study needs ☐
(2) General interest/information unrelated to study ☐
(3) Recreational and leisure purposes ☐
(4) As a place to study ☐

9. What resources, services and facilities do you use in your university or college library?
(You may tick more than one)

(1) Books and other materials for loan ☐
(2) Reference books (e.g. Encyclopedias, indexes) ☐
(3) Journals/Newspapers ☐
(4) Audio-visual materials/equipment ☐
(5) Computers ☐
(6) Online database searches ☐
(7) Study area ☐
(8) Assistance from library staff ☐
(9) Photocopier ☐
(10) Interlibrary loans ☐
(11) Other (Please specify) ☐

10. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements, by ticking the relevant box.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A. I usually obtain the materials I need from the university/college library					
B. I have received adequate instruction on the use of the university/college library, its catalogues and collections					
C. I find library staff at my university/college library helpful and approachable					
D. Often I find the materials I need (although listed in the catalogue) are not available:not on the shelves, on loan					
E. I find my university/college library a suitable place for study					
F. If my university/college library does not have the title I need, library staff obtain it for me from another library					

11. (a) Are you aware of a system whereby you can borrow at other colleges and universities?
(the Reciprocal Borrowing Scheme)

(1) Yes
(2) No

(b) If "Yes", have you ever found material this way?

(1) Yes
(2) No

SECTION C USAGE OF LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

COMPLETE THIS SECTION OF YOU USE YOUR LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

12. Are you a member of your local public library?

(1) Yes
(2) No

13. For what purposes do you use your local public library?
[You may tick more than one]

(1) Course-related/study needs
(2) General interest/information unrelated to study
(3) Recreational and leisure purposes
(4) As a place to study

14. What resources, services and facilities do you use in your local public library?
[You may tick more than one]

(1) Books and other materials for loan
(2) Reference books (e.g. Encyclopedias, indexes)
(3) Journals/Newspapers
(4) Audio-visual materials/equipment
(5) Computers
(6) Online database searches
(7) Study area
(8) Assistance from library staff
(9) Photocopier
(10) Interlibrary loans
(11) Other (Please specify)

15. If you use your local public library for course-related/study needs, is this because:

(1) Although the material is listed in your university/college library catalogue, it was not on the shelves. ☐
(2) Your university/college library does not appear to own the material you need. ☐
(3) The loans period at your university/college library is too short. ☐
(4) The local public library has resources your university/college library lacks. ☐
(5) The local public library is prepared to arrange inter-library loans for you. ☐
(6) You find the local public library easier to use than your university/college library. ☐
(7) Your university/college library is too crowded/lacks study space. ☐
(8) The local public library is more accessible/closer to home. ☐
(9) The local public library's hours of opening are convenient. ☐
(10) Other (Please specify) _____ ☐

16. Roughly what proportion of the library resources you use for your study come from your local public library?

(1) Less than 10% ☐
(2) Less than 25% ☐
(3) 25%-49% ☐
(4) 50%-74% ☐
(5) 75%-100% ☐

17. How would you rate the quality of service provided at your loc public library overall?
[Please circle the relevant option]

Very good | Good | Average | Poor | Very Poor

18. How would you rate the quality of services provided at your local public library in the following areas?
[Please tick the relevant box]

TYPE OF SERVICE	QUALITY OF SERVICE 1 Very good	2 Good	3 Average	4 Poor	5 Very poor	9 No opinion/ undecided
Assistance from library staff						
Provision of materials for course-related and study purposes						
Provision of materials for general interest/information unrelated to study						
Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes						
Reference collection (e.g. encyclopedias, indexes)						
Journals/newspapers						
Audio-visual collection						
Computer facilities/services						
Photocopying facilities						
Loans service						
Inter-library loans						
Other (Please specify)						

19. In comparison with your university/college library would you say service <u>overall</u> at your local public library is:

Much better	Better	As good	Inferior	Greatly Inferior

20. In comparison with your university/college library would you say services in the following areas at your local public library are: *[Please tick the relevant box]*

TYPE OF SERVICE	QUALITY OF SERVICE 1 Much better	2 Better	3 As good	4 Inferior	5 Greatly inferior	0 No opinion/ undecided
Assistance from library staff						
Provision of materials for course-related and study purposes						
Provision of materials for general interest/information unrelated to study						
Provision of materials for recreational and leisure purposes						
Reference collection (e.g. encyclopedias, indexes)						
Journals/newspapers						
Audio-visual collection						
Computer facilities/services						
Photocopying facilities						
Loans service						
Inter-library loans						
Other (Please specify)						

21. When public library staff realise you are a tertiary student, are they:

(1) Very helpful, going out of their way to help you. ☐
(2) Reasonably helpful. ☐
(3) Not very helpful. ☐
(4) Very unhelpful, perhaps suggesting that you use your university/ college library instead ☐

22. Is there anything that you would like to add.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR COOPERATING WITH OUR SURVEY. YOUR TIME AND EFFORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.

APPENDIX B Follow up letter

RMIT

Department of Information Services

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

GPO Box 2476V
Melbourne Vic 3001
Telephone 6602900
Telegraphic Address
'Melltech' Melbourne
Telex AA36406

June 11, 1986

TERTIARY STUDENTS' USAGE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Tertiary Student,

A couple of weeks ago, you received a mail questionnaire which was designed to gather data on:

- the nature and extent of tertiary students' usage of public libraries;
- the respective roles of academic and public libraries in catering for tertiary students' study needs: and
- the quality and usefulness of services provided.

This information will serve as valuable input for the Library Association of Australia and individual public and academic libraries, to identify concerns, and to assist in the planning of improved services and the rationalisation of resources between libraries.

So far, we have not received your response. Perhaps you have been very busy, have simply forgotten, or felt that it was useless returning the questionnaire seeing the due date had passed.

Currently we are encoding the first batch of replies. To further increase response rate, and hence generalisability of results, we are planning to process a second batch. We would be delighted if you could help us out by returning your questionnaire. If you have mislaid it and need another one, please ring me on 6602900, so that I can send you another.

If you have already posted your questionnaire, please disregard this letter.

Thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Kerry Grosser

Kerry Grosser,
Lecturer,
Department of Information Services

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Limited Registered Office 124 La Trobe Street Melbourne 3000

APPENDIX C Additional cover letters included by Footscray Institute of Technology and La Trobe University

Footscray Institute of Technology

Ballarat Road, Footscray. P.O. Box 64, Footscray. Victoria. Australia 3011
Telegrams: Fitinst. Telex: Fitlex AA 36596. Facsimile: (03) 689 4069. TelePhone: (03) 688 4200

Director D.R Mills

Assistant Director
I M Herrman

LIBRARY

Ext
A/H 688 4266
OB/650

28th May 1986

Dear Student,

The attached questionnaire is being distributed to a random selection of F.I.T. students through the RMIT Department of Information Services. The survey is being organized at F.I.T. through the library in an attempt to establish what type of use tertiary students make of public libraries. It will also provide us with data to assist in improving our services to our own students. This survey is being conducted at a number of universities and colleges in Melbourne.

The information provided is confidential and your name is not included on your survey form.

I hope you will take the time to fill in as much of the questionnaire as possible. If you have any questions do not hesitate to ring me on 688 4423 or see me next time you are in the library.

Yours faithfully,

J Rogan.

JOHN ROGAN
Technical Services Librarian

Registrar's Department

La Trobe University
Bundoora Victoria
Australia 3083.
Telephone (03) 478 3122
Telegraphic address
Latrobe Melbourne
Telex No. (AA) 33143

27 May 1986

Dear Student,

I am writing to explain the background to the invitation that is included with this letter.

The invitation from the Department of Information Services at RMIT working in co-operation with the Library Association of Australia (University and College Libraries Section and Public Libraries Section) seeks your help with a research project which focuses on the usage of public libraries by tertiary students.

You will understand that it is not the usual practice at La Trobe to release the names and addresses of students to anyone for purposes other than formal communication between the institution and the students. I have therefore elected to proceed in this way: that is, to write to you enclosing the invitation and so give you the opportunity to decide whether you wish to be involved. This procedure will mean that your name and address will not be known to the project co-ordinators unless you respond to the invitation.

If you are prepared to help with this project would you please complete the questionnaire and return it to RMIT in the enclosed envelope. Postage on the return envelope is prepaid.

Yours sincerely,

D. E. Neilson,
Registrar.

4.6 'Other comments'

Approximately four hundred respondents took the opportunity to give 'other comments' at the end of the questionnaire, evidence of the high degree of concern amongst tertiary students over library services and facilities. As one student concluded: *'Thank you for asking for my opinion. I hope I've been of help, and some major changes occur to improve our libraries, as they are a major part of my, and other students', lives.'*

'Other comments' were invaluable in the data analysis phase, providing further insights and clarifying aspects of the frequencies and crosstabulation data.

Comments clustered around four broad areas:

(1) **Students' own university or college libraries** - both positive comments and negative evaluations of problem areas, difficulties encountered, and suggestions for improving services.

(2) **Public library services** - again, an overall evaluation of service provision, problem areas, and suggestions for new or improved services, but with particular emphasis on the relative roles of academic and public libraries in students' lives.

(3) **Other libraries** - particularly the State Library of Victoria and various special libraries.

(4) **The questionnaire** - questions causing difficulty, or explanations and elaborations of answers given earlier in the questionnaire.

4.61 Comments on university and college libraries

Comments fell broadly into three categories:

(a) General observations on academic library services

(b) Specific comments on library services at each institution

(c) Suggestions for improving services in university and college libraries

(a) General observations on academic library services

Before considering specific problem areas identified by students in individual libraries, it is worth highlighting some of the most pervasive issues raised, to a greater or lesser degree, by students from all institutions. Some points which are developed further in relation to particular institutions in Part (b) of this Section are treated summarily here, while others are discussed at greater length.

Major problem areas:

(1) **Ageing library collections** Many respondents raised the issue of lack of up to date materials in their libraries, both books and serials - whether this is due primarily to drastic cuts in materials budgets, resulting in, for example, mass cancellations of serial titles in libraries, or to mounting cataloguing backlogs, or both, is unclear. Whatever the case, this is a serious issue which must throw into doubt the ability of some academic libraries to service adequately the range of courses taught in their institutions, and, in turn, reaccreditation of many of the existing courses.

Results

(2) **Unavailability of high demand titles at the times they are needed** No institution was exempt from the perennial complaint of failure to provide sufficient copies of a title to keep pace with student demands. As one respondent observed: *'It is the degree of demand for material that at times makes such material virtually inaccessible when it is needed most.'* The sheer frustration of students unable to locate a vital reference is vividly portrayed in the following comment: *'It takes so much time unless you are completely familiar with a library to find anything. Then someone's usually borrowed the bloody thing or you're not allowed to.'*

With a rapidly contracting resource base, it appears that the only way academic libraries can handle this problem is by a greater reliance on Closed Reserve collections, placing increasing proportions of library materials in such collections. As relatively few students can complete the required reading in the limited loans period of two or three hours, they are relying more and more on photocopying, and are spending considerable sums of money, not to mention time spent standing in photocopying queues, in the process. Photocopying facilities, particularly in the colleges, are stretched to the limit. An inevitable corollary of this is the widespread flouting of copyright laws.

Apart from the escalating incidence of photocopying, respondents indicated several other methods they used to cope with the increasing problem of unavailability of titles. For some of the more affluent, it was a matter of buying more texts, in preference to using other scurces of supply. One respondent said:

'I'm probably not the best person to complete this questionnaire as I have invested in a large number of expensive course text books. I buy $50 -$60 worth of text books a month, which is usually more than I can read, so my use of library materials has been limited.'

Some other comments:

'I don't use libraries - I buy books - it's easier.'

'I tend to buy books I wish to read rather than using libraries. The vast majority of my course related information is in text books any way.'

' Because of the difficulties in physically getting to the library, I tend to buy major prescribed texts.' [a sentiment expressed by many part timers].

Others had devised less expensive means of procuring materials for prescribed reading, through the use of cooperative arrangements amongst groups of students. This took one of three forms:

(i) **cooperative purchasing arrangements** amongst a number of friends

(ii) a **liberal sharing of personal libraries** amongst friends

(iii) **groups of students from different tertiary institutions who borrow in an organised way for their friends** - like an unofficial reciprocal borrowing arrangement, but which avoids all the red tape and restrictions. This was used particularly by groups of students residing together in residential colleges, hostels or flats. As one student admitted:

> *'To date I have been using Chisholm Caulfield extensively . . . close friends attending the College borrow books for me, as I do at Melbourne Uni. for them - it's a lot less hassle, we feel.'* And, another respondent:
>
> *'When I can't find the books I need at my College Library, I ask my friends to borrow books from their libraries (RMIT, La Trobe Uni., Melbourne Uni., Melbourne College, etc.), thereby having a wide use of tertiary libraries.'*

Apart from such options, the other obvious source of titles temporarily unavailable in the student's own academic library is to try other libraries, be they other tertiary libraries,