

Librarian vs. Student Perspectives on Technology

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Research Question

How closely do our librarians' opinions of student preferences align with students' expressed preferences?

Background

We had previously conducted a Q-study with students to examine their preferences for a range of services, including space, technology, and collections. In that study, we identified undergraduate student personas

Now, rather than examining the student data through the lens of Q-study, we instead are focusing on the cards themselves—the services—and comparing average scores for items between students and newly collected data: librarians' card sort.

Method

We asked librarians at our institution to sort 60 items based on what they felt students from most wanted to least wanted.

We then compared the librarian card sorts to student card sorts completed during the Q-study.

The 60 card items were developed from data previously collected at the University of Mississippi through user surveys, internal surveys, and focus groups. We also included services and space-related items offered at a random sampling of ARL Libraries nationwide.

Data Collection

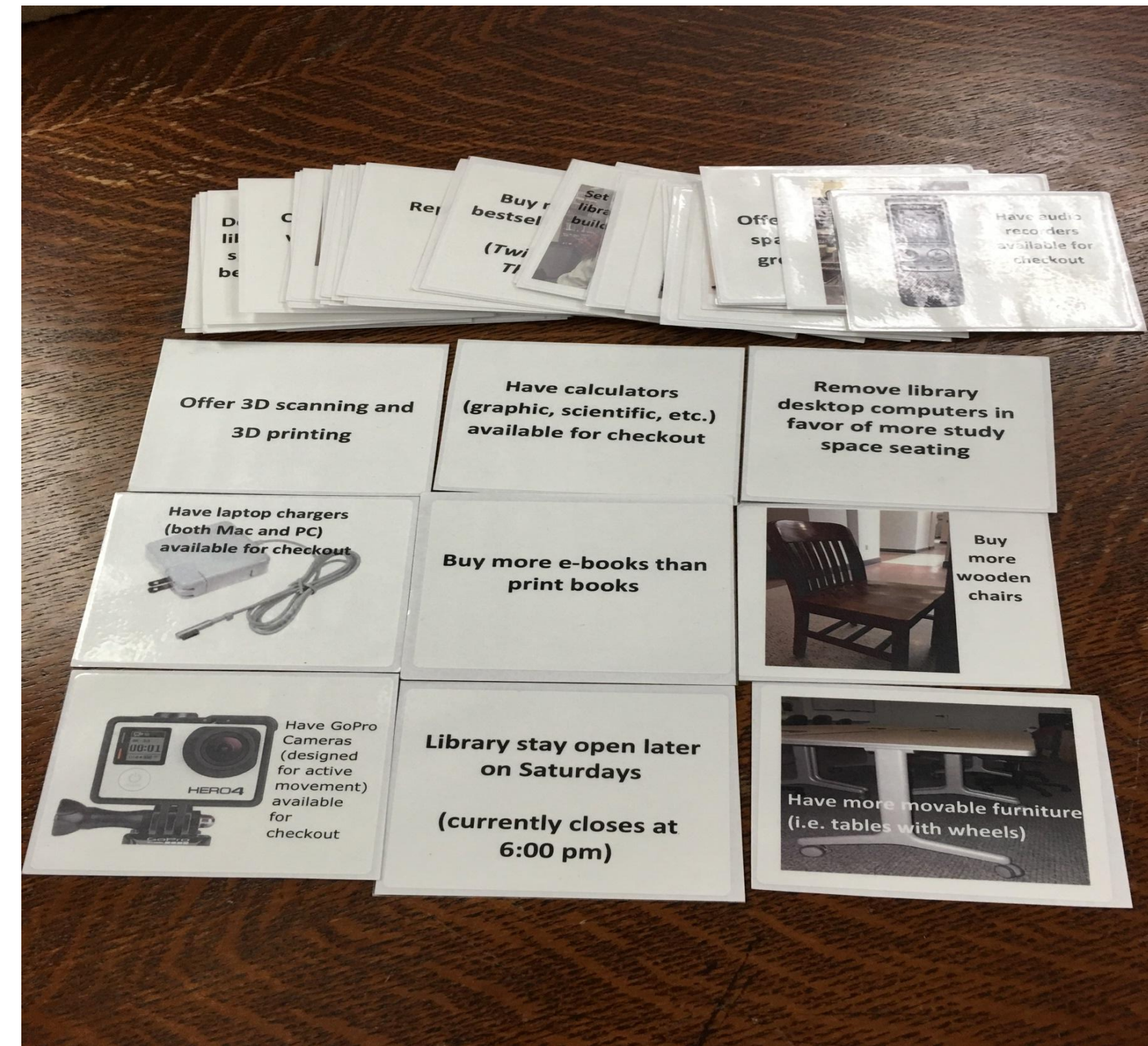


Image 1: Sampling of cards being sorted

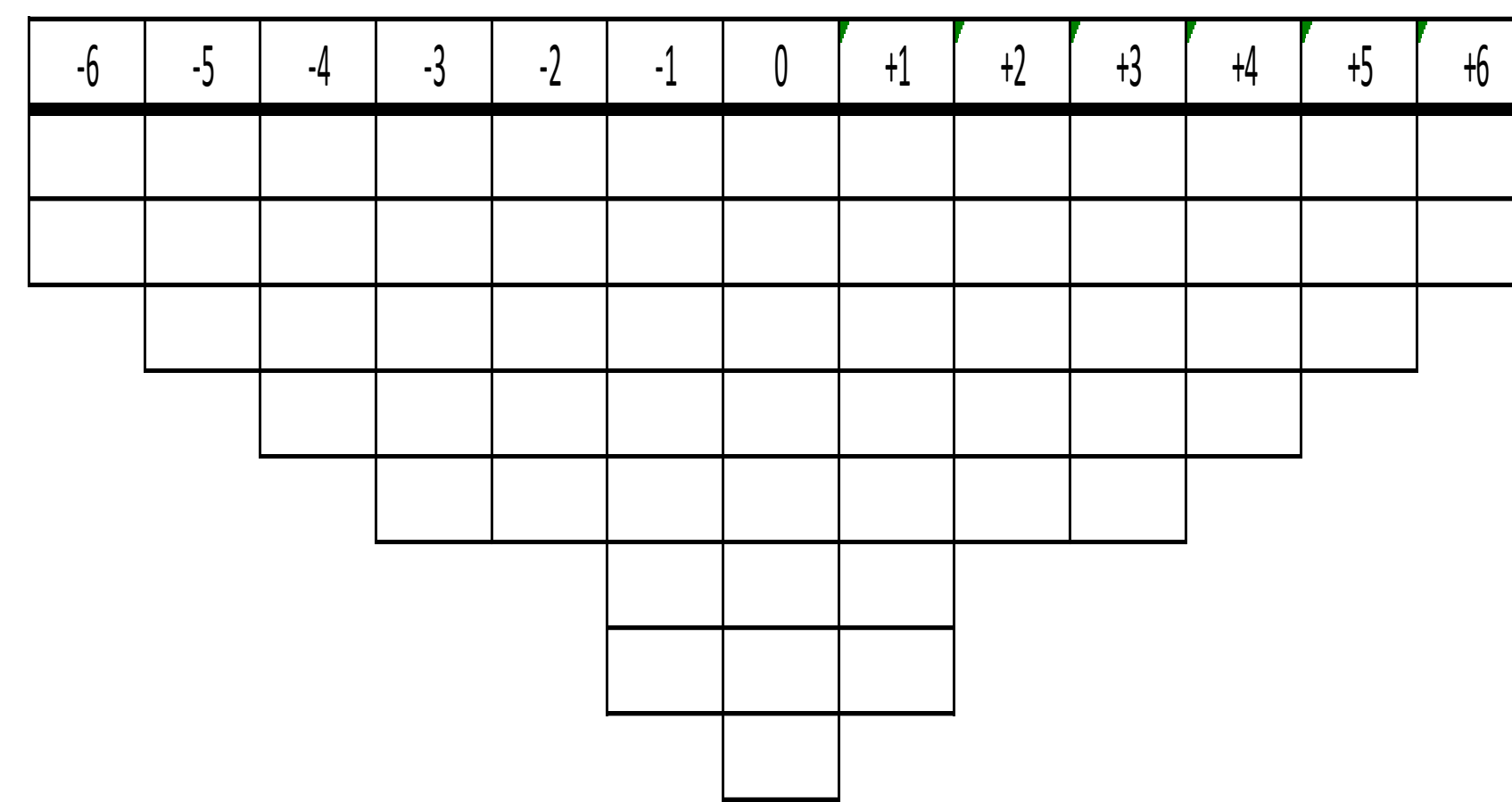
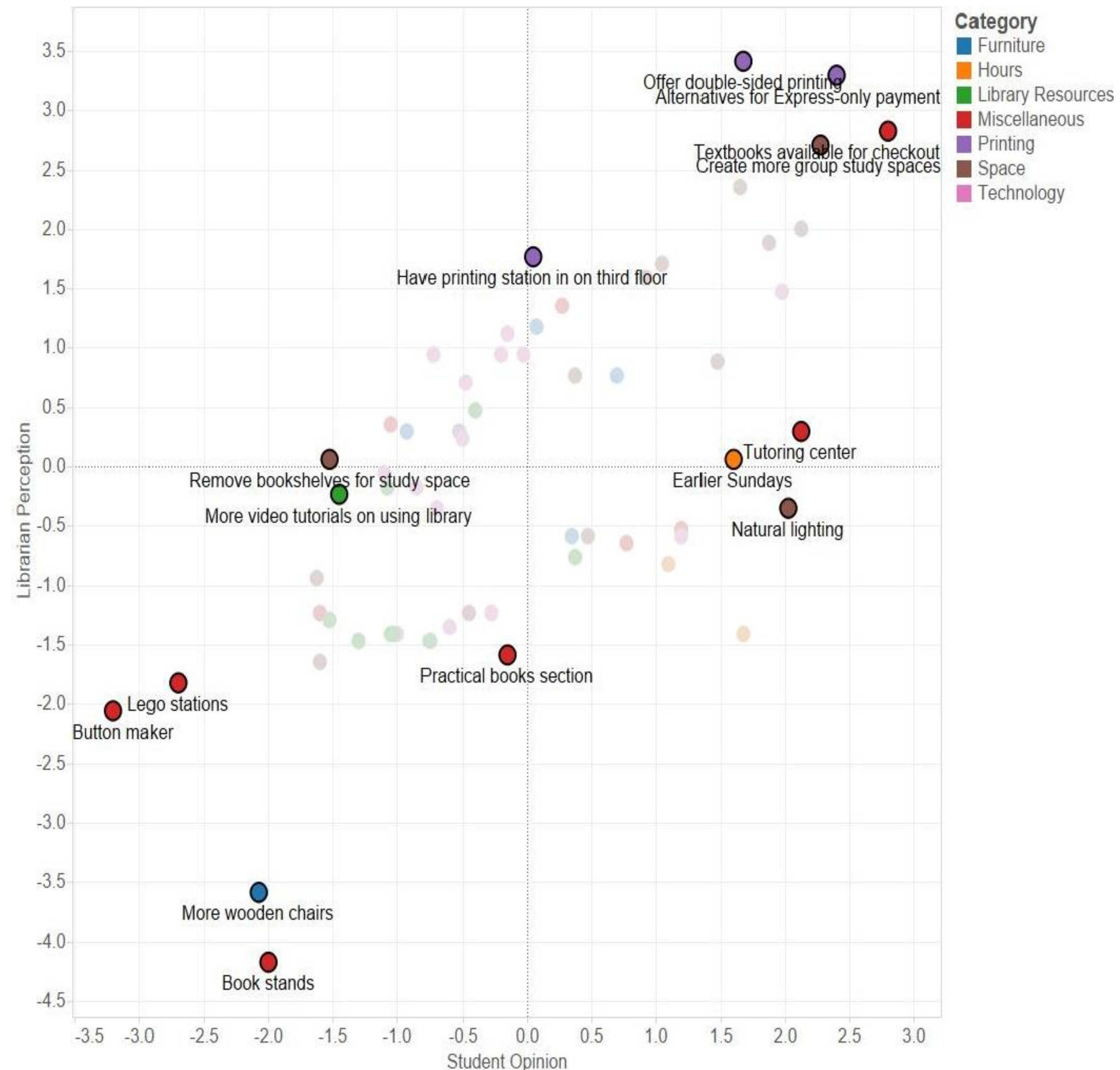


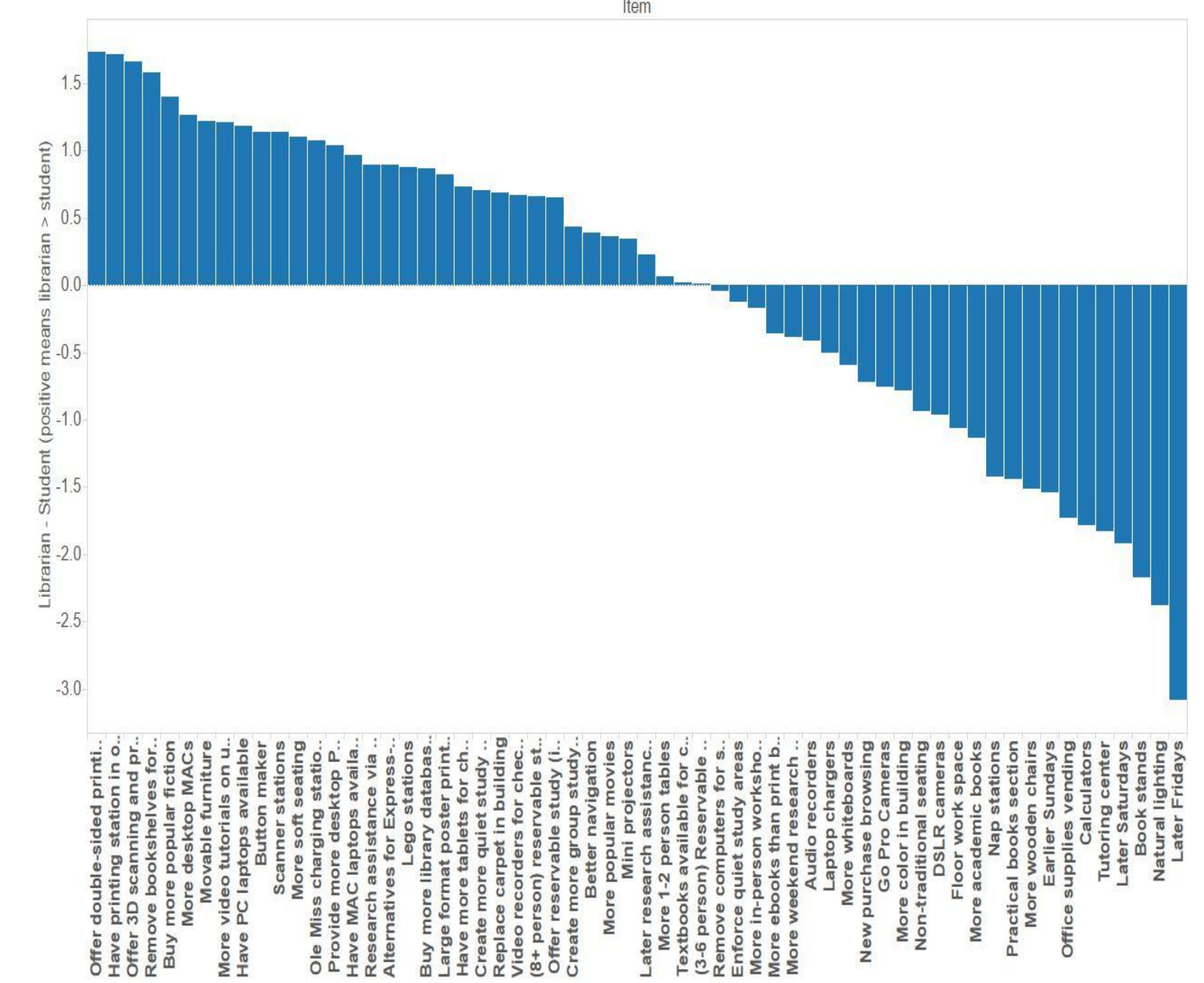
Image 2: Grid layout for cards

Results



Results

Student Opinions vs. Librarian Expectations



Discussion

Librarians overestimated (9 out of 14) students' preferences for technology

- 3D printing
- Mac Laptops
- More desktop PCs
- More tablets
- PC laptops
- Video recorders
- Additional scanners
- Mini projectors
- More desktop PCs

Students' overall rankings were negative, relative to other items, on technology. The only two positive rankings were:

- Laptop chargers (1.975)
- Calculators (1.2)

Researchers

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